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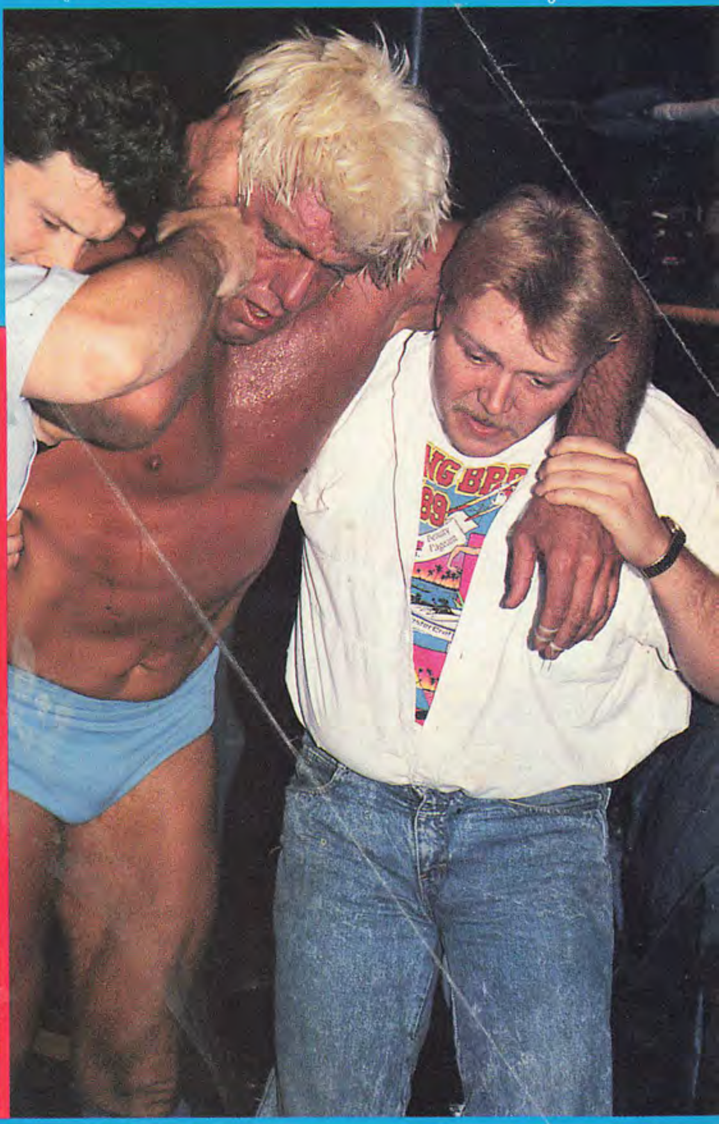

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YOUR LETTERS

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BRAVOMANIA?

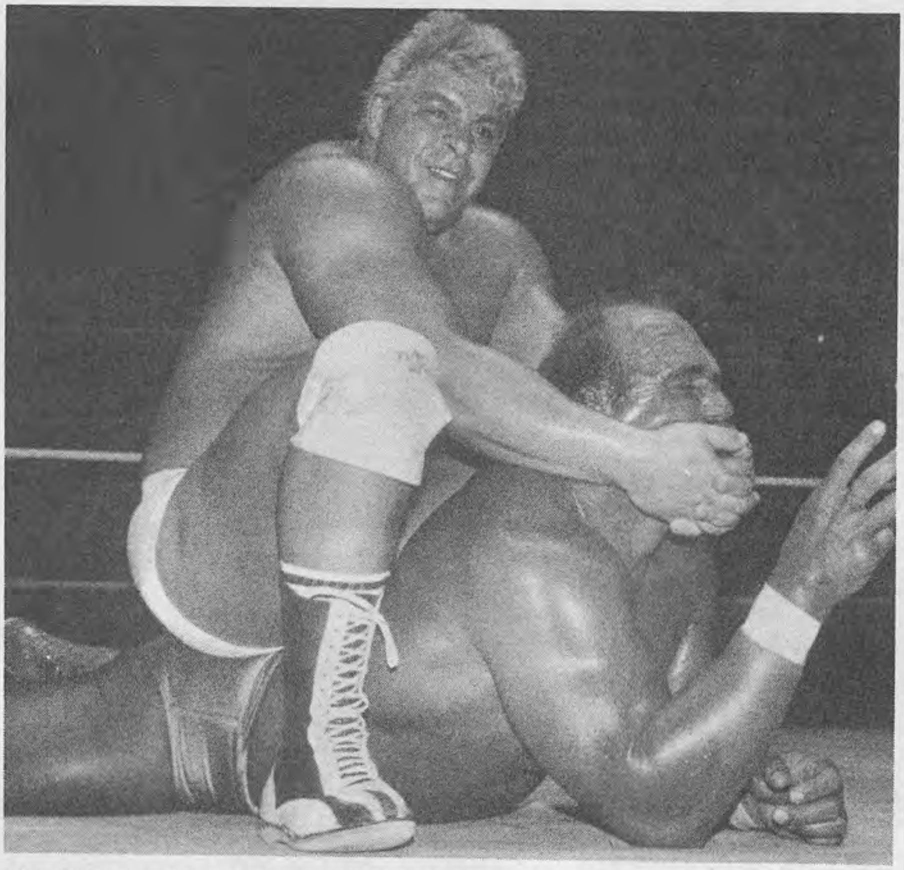
Finally, you've seen the light with the article in your July 1989 issue, "Dino Bravo: The Man Hulk Hogan Cannot Beat." This story showed that Bravo indeed still has loyal fans in Canada. I'm one of them, and I'm proud of it!

Yes, Dino gives Hogan a hell of a beating. Yes, Hogan was afraid of Bravo when he was champion the first time. But now that Hogan is the WWF World champion again, he'll have no choice but to give Dino a title shot. When he does, Hogan will be put out of wrestling forever and Bravo will be a *real* champion.

This was one of the finest articles I've ever seen in your magazine, and I hope I see more stories on Canadian wrestlers, because they are the best. I'm 100 percent behind Bravo, and also Jacques and Raymond Rougeau and Rick Martel.

Long live "French Power" in the WWF!

BERTRAND HEBERT
Beauharnois, Quebec



Dino Bravo executes a spinestretcher against Hulk Hogan. Reader Bertrand Hebert thinks Bravo will win Hogan's WWF World title if he gets the chance.

BOO TO COLUMNISTS

Although I enjoyed the July issue, I took strong exception to one comment by Bob Smith in his "Blindsided" column. He referred to the legendary Frank Gotch as "bland."

Frank Gotch was probably the greatest professional wrestler of all time. Not only was he a pioneer of the "catch-as-catch-can" style of wrestling, he was the first American to be recognized as a world heavyweight champion. He defended his belt against all comers from around the world, retired with his title intact, and was a genuine American hero in his day.

There was nothing at all bland about this legend. Although he only

weighed 200 pounds, I'm convinced that Gotch could easily outwrestle and tie any current champion or top contender in knots.

MARK S. HEWITT
Gaithersburg, MD

Hey, Andy Rodriguez! Don't you feel kind of stupid for writing the "Win, Lose, Or Draw" column on referee Teddy Long in the June 1989 issue?

Teddy Long was barred from refereeing and is now a manager. Reader Greg Grzelak gives Assistant Editor Andy Rodriguez a "thumbs down" for his column praising Long as a referee.

How long did it take you to complete that classic? *Everyone*—except, that is, for you—could see that there was a change coming in Long for months. So perhaps *you* deserve a "Thumbs Down" for ever having anything good to say about a referee. I thought you would have learned your lesson after what happened with Danny Davis.

Some expert you turned out to be!

GREG GRZELAK
Lombard, IL

MANAGERIAL MAYHEM

I'm writing in response to Matt Brock's article in the July 1989 issue entitled "Memo To WWF Wrestlers: Thinking Of Hiring A Manager? Don't Bother!" I'm in full agreement with Brock in that the managers in the WWF are ridiculous. But you can add others like Paul E. Dangerously and Downtown Bruno to the list, too.

In my eyes, there are only two men in professional wrestling that truly deserve the title of manager, and they are James J. Dillon and Jim Cornette. These men spend quality time with their wrestlers reviewing tapes, going over game plans, plotting out strategies for matches, and scouting current and future opponents.

Though they've been known to get a little too involved in their men's matches, Dillon and Cornette have also contributed to the morale and confidence of their wrestlers, in addition to handling the clerical and business aspects of the sport. A manager should also be a compliment to his clientele, an instrument to improve and operate more efficiently.

Jim Cornette (with The Midnight Express) is a great manager, writes Curtis Bellamy, because he does more than interfere in his men's matches. He also plans strategy and scouts possible opponents.

What strategies did Elizabeth employ to take Randy Savage to the WWF World title? What strategies did Bobby Heenan use to take Rick Rude to the Intercontinental title? None that I could see in either instance. Randy got to the championship on sheer guts—and a little help from Hulk Hogan—while Heenan and his contemporaries do nothing but interfere with matches and annoy fans.

CURTIS BELLAMY
Fairfield, CA

CHANGES FOR THE BETTER?

How could you guys give Lanny "The Genius" Poffo a "thumbs down" in the "Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down" column in the July 1989 issue?

I feel very strongly about Poffo as he begins his new career as a rulebreaker. He's had a bad stint in the WWF and he's just doing something to improve it. I had spoken with him last summer at Madison Square Garden in New York and I asked him how it felt to be the brother of then-champion Randy Savage. He just looked at me in disgust, said "I don't know," and left.

Think about *that,* guys. He was dissatisfied then, but now he's going to take his frustrations out on his opponents.

PHILIP BRUNO
New York

So Rick Martel is now a rulebreaker, and it seems everyone was shocked by his decision to hire Slick as his new manager. Everyone, that is, except me.

From the moment Martel returned to the WWF prior to the Royal Rumble, the look in his eyes during inter-

(Continued on page 44)

WHAT'S HAPPENING!

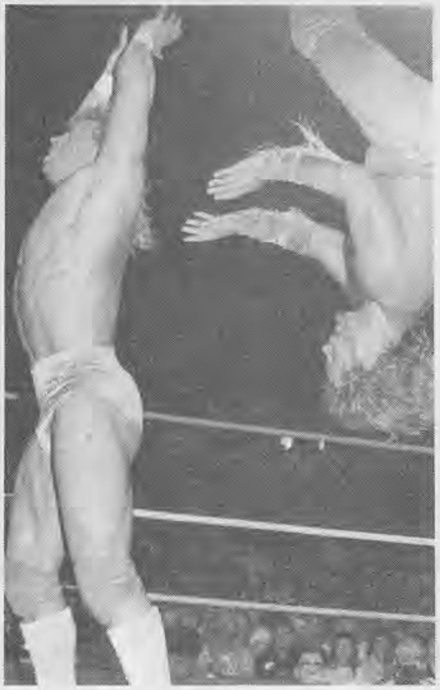
By BILL APTER

IT DIDN'T TAKE long for **Lex Luger** to turn his Nashville nightmare into the realization of a dream. The "Total Package" regained the U.S. title from **Michael Hayes** on May 22 in Bluefield, West Virginia, just 15 days after losing it to Hayes at Wrestle War '89.

It was an impressive victory by Luger, who has become extremely aggressive lately. The "Total Package" narrowly escaped defeat when Hayes grabbed his trunks for a near three-count, then reversed it by pulling *Hayes'* trunks down for the pin. Afterward, Luger vowed to never again lose the title and promised an all-out assault on **Ric Flair's** NWA championship.

"The days of Mr. Nice Guy are over," Luger said. "From here on out, you people are gonna be seeing a new Lex Luger. That means no taking it easy, no signing autographs, no following every rule to the letter. That's gotten me nowhere. I'm gonna go after what I want, and I'm gonna get it. I don't have time for nonsense anymore."

Luger, a three-time U.S. champion who has never won the World title, is incensed that **Terry Funk** is staking a claim to a title shot.



Lex Luger backflips Michael Hayes. The "Total Package" regained the U.S. title barely two weeks after losing it to Hayes at Wrestle War '89.

"I'm U.S. champ, and that makes me the number-one contender. If anybody's gonna wrestle Flair, it's gonna be me," Luger said. "This is one of the few times I actually agree with Flair. Funk's been in Hollywood while we've been busting our butts. He deserves nothing."

Dusty Rhodes is in the WWF! Rhodes, a three-time former NWA World champion who has been as closely associated with the NWA as just about any other star, has reached an agreement with WWF officials and was to start competing in early June. Rhodes, who wrestled in the WWF back in the 1970s and early 1980s, called this a "major career move."

"It was time for the 'Big Show,'" Rhodes said. "I decided to go where the big money is, where more people than ever before can see the 'American Dream' at work. I been there before, I've conquered the WWF once, and I'm gonna conquer it again. I don't plan on taking over from **Hulk Hogan**, but he's just gonna have to move aside a bit and make room for me."

Carlos Colon injured his left arm during his loss of the WWC Universal title to **Steve Strong** in a Texas death match. Colon required surgery and has been sidelined. Colon and **Invader I** also lost the WWC tag belts to **Rip Rogers** and **Abughdadien** . . . Atlantic Coast Wrestling champion **Don Kernodle** is after **Colt Steel**. Kernodle is angry that Steel's "Colt

(Continued on page 46)

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THE BEST KEEPS GETTING BETTER—BECAUSE YOU WON'T SETTLE FOR LESS!

WIN LOSE OR DRAW

BY ANDY RODRIGUEZ

THREE MONTHS AGO in this space, I wrote a column praising referee Teddy Long. I thought he had been doing an excellent job and I wanted to give him some recognition.

However, the June issue of *The Wrestler* had barely hit the stands when Long's officiating cost The Road Warriors the NWA World tag team title. Over the next few weeks, Long's actions were even more suspicious. Finally, NWA Executive Vice President Jim Herd fired him.

"Cheap. That's what it was, cheap," Long said at a press conference after he was dumped. "That man Herd heard wrong about me. I am not the man he was looking for. That was Tommy Young breaking all those rules."

One reporter said it wouldn't be hard to tell him and Young apart.

"I'll ignore that comment," Long sneered.

But Long himself cannot be ignored. He's a manager now, managing a fellow named Norman. The one thing we know about Norman is this: He likes to hurt people. Three months ago, Long wouldn't have been associated with such a creature.

"Circumstances call the shots now, son," Long told me. "Okay, maybe when I was a referee I didn't need protection. Now I do. What would you do if The Road Warriors wanted to kick your butt?"

Good point, Teddy, good point.

"That's another thing!" Long yelled. "My name is not Teddy, it's Theodore R. Long. Get it right!"

I wouldn't want to cross Mr. Long, especially since he has a new friend in Norman. But after what he did to me, I'll call him Teddy if I please.

You may consider that an arrogant attitude, but Long deserves nothing more. He's a conniving sneak who, unfortunately, will probably be a successful manager (moral standards in that occupation being what they are). Still, one must wonder: How could this have happened?

"Teddy just snapped," speculates referee Young, his former colleague. "Really, in all the time I knew him, there wasn't any indication something like this would happen. He seemed happy being a referee. He wanted to do all the big matches. I was just as surprised as anyone about this."

"Snapped, my foot," said NWA announcer Jim Ross. "Long's had this planned for months, I'm sure. I know for a fact that Kevin Sullivan had a lot of conversations with him about tactics and so forth. He used his position of trust as a referee to trick all of us. I for one am insulted by it. I have a hard time maintaining my objectivity where Long is concerned. It's one thing when a wrestler goes bad, but a ref? That's where I draw the line."

Oddly enough, Long was pleased with my previous column on him. "You did a great job in that column, young man, a fabulous job," he said when I interviewed him again

(Continued on page 45)

Teddy Long (or Theodore R. Long, as he prefers to be called) scouts future opponents for his wrestler Norman. Long was barred from officiating in the NWA after several questionable calls.

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June 1985/Stories include: Rhodes, Windham, Rich, Hogan.

July 1985/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Reed, Martel, Sunshine.

August 1985/BONUS 4-PG. COLOR SECTION! Plus: Warriors, Magnum T.A., Sheik & Volkoff, McGraw.

September 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Savage, R&R Express.

October 1985/Stories include: Flair, Windham, Shultz, Martel.

November 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Zbyszko, R&R Express, Von Erichs.

December 1985/Stories include: Rude, Fantastics, Muraco, Uncle Elmer.

January 1986/20th Anniversary Issue! 10 Greatest Wrestlers, Rhodes, Hogan, Sammartino.

February 1986/Stories include: Hogan, Orndorff, Flair, Hansen.

March 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Duggan, Hansen-Martel.

April 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Rude, Lugar, Hogan, Magnum T.A.

May 1986/Stories include: Zbyszko, Von Erichs, Santana-Ventura, Hillbillies.

June 1986/Stories include: Lugar, Hernandez, Flair-Bockwinkel, Hogan, T.A.

July 1986/Stories include: King Kong Bundy, Koloff vs. Graham, Ric Flair.

August 1986/Stories include: Snuka, Bulldogs, Freebirds, Warriors, Duggan.

September 1986/Stories include: Fantastics, Adonis, Morton-Flair, Brody.

October 1986/Stories include: Nikita-Magnum, Nord, Bruno, Kerry, Windham.

November 1986/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan-Orndorff, Von Erich.

December 1986/Stories include: Flair, Bockwinkel, Hogan, Gilbert, Nikita.

January 1987/Stories include: Heenan, Garvins, DiBiase, Borne & Sawyer.

February 1987/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Gordy, Steamboat-Roberts.

March 1987/Stories include: Windham, Nikita, Adias, Savage-Steamboat.

April 1987/Stories include: Hogan, Luger, Rich-Lawler, R&R Express.

May 1987/Stories include: Flair-Nikita, Andre-Hogan, UWF, Windham, Hennig.

June 1987/Stories include: Flair-Windham, Can-Ams, Rhodes-Murdoch.

July 1987/Stories include: Cornette, Hyatt, Luger, Harts, Adams, Hansen.

August 1987/Stories include: Can-Ams, Luger vs. Nikita, Fantastics, Koko, Nord.

September 1987/Stories include: Koloffs, Harts, Duggan, Hennig, Hart.

October 1987/Stories include: Savage-Honky Tonk, Horsemen, Patera, Kerry.

November 1987/Stories include: Williams, Luger, Hogan-Khan, Rich.

December 1987/Stories include: Hogan, Windham, Lawler, Flair, Beefcake.

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February 1988/Stories include: Flair, Andre-Hogan, New Breed, Kerry.

March 1988/Stories include: Hogan, Luger-Sting, Calgary, Demolition.

April 1988/Special issue! Starrcade '87, Survivor Series, AWA & World Class. Also: Strike Force, Luger, Rockers.

May 1988/Stories include: Horsemen, Hogan, Flair, Fantastics, DiBiase.

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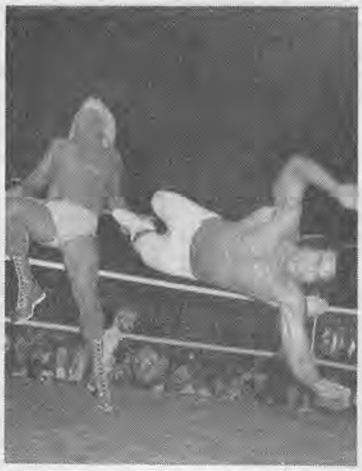
BLINDSIDED

BY BOB SMITH

THE MATCHES MIGHT be over now, but I'm afraid I'm going to go through a serious withdrawal period. It was tough enough giving up cigarettes, but giving up those classic Ric Flair-Rick Steamboat title matches might be too much for me to stand.

What more could a serious wrestling fan want? Flair, now a six-time NWA World champion, was as persistent a challenger as any in history. Steamboat, whose first half of 1989 was the kind that most wrestlers can only dream of, was a fighting champion in every sense of the word.

Together, these two men made pure wrestling magic. The Steamboat-Flair matches have been covered throughout our family of magazines, but to me no amount of ink could do them justice. Night after night, they pushed each other to the heights of athletic excellence, proving that pro wrestling need not take a backseat to any other sport in terms of excitement.



Steamboat dropkicks Flair

I'm sure you have your favorite Steamboat-Flair memories, especially the golden moment on February 20 when Steamboat copped the NWA title. But there was a lot more to this feud than that. My favorites:

- January 18, Atlanta: Steamboat shocked the world when he showed up as Eddie Gilbert's mystery partner against Flair and Barry Windham on TBS' *World Championship Wrestling.* After several minutes of incredible action, "The Dragon" delivered a stunning flying bodyblock from the top turnbuckle to pin Flair and set up what would become the renewal of a classic rivalry.
- April 2, New Orleans: The incredible 54:29 best-of-three-falls rematch during the Ragin' Cajun Clash. It was one of the few times Flair would ever submit, as he did in the second fall because of Steamboat's painful double chicken-wing. That one maneuver may have been the greatest of Steamboat's career.
- April 8, New Haven, Connecticut: I was lucky enough to be in the audience for this one. Only six days after the New Orleans classic, Flair and Steamboat were at it again, going a whopping 34:07, and it was if they were meeting each other for the first time. I couldn't believe their chests could take anymore of their jarring chops, but somehow they did.
- May 7, Nashville: The final showdown was just another example of why these two men may be the greatest wrestlers of their time. Flair reversed a bodyslam attempt to grab Steamboat's already-wounded left leg, rolling up his sixth title at the 31:33 mark.

Even if you threw away the fact that the NWA championship was on the line—or that Terry Funk attacked Flair right after his recapturing of the title—this would still be one of the greatest series of all time. It surely was for the men involved.

"I've never been so proud as I am now," said Steamboat a few weeks after he *lost* the title. "I've always had differences with Flair, and I know he's had them with me. But once we started wrestling, nothing mattered. I was at the top of my game, and I know he was at the top of his. Even though I lost our final match, he beat me fair and square in the center of the ring. Since I gave my all, I went out as champion with my head held high."

"He held the belt for only three months, but Steamboat was a great champion," said Flair, at press time still convalescing from injuries suffered at the hands of Funk. "He took me to my limits every time I met him. Who else has ever been able to do that?"

Indeed, what other two athletes will be able to match this degree of greatness? Frankly, I don't think anyone will come close to this level of performance for a long, long time. Rick Steamboat vs. Ric Flair was the greatest matchup I ever saw, but I haven't had my fill. I'm going through serious withdrawal pangs trying to find something nearly as good.

What do you say, boys—how about going around one more time? □

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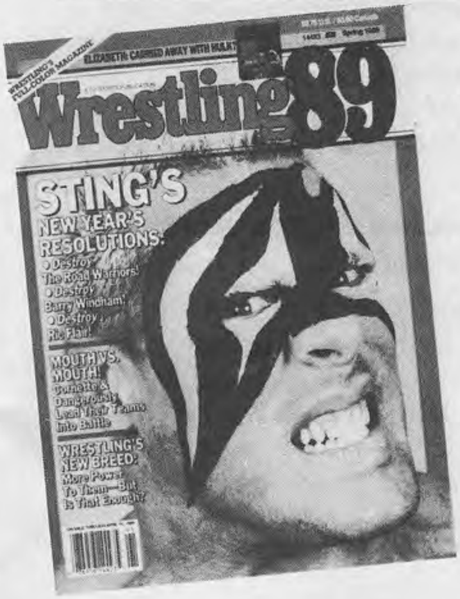

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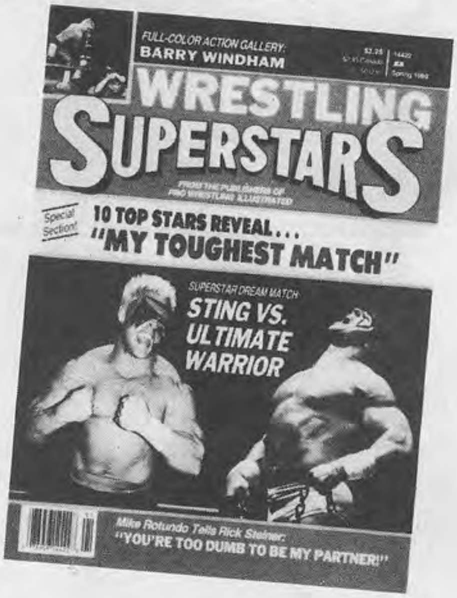

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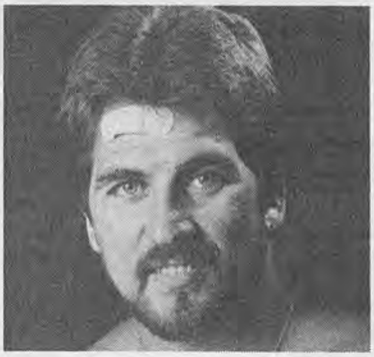
Thumbs Up

Each issue, *The Wrestler* will praise the noteworthy and damn those who violate the honor of wrestling. The praiseworthy receive a Thumbs Up, the disgraceful are marked with a Thumbs Down. Here is this month's roll of honor and shame.

Thumbs Up to Elizabeth. Normally, we wouldn't commend a woman for deserting her man when he's in need, but this is an absolutely unique situation. By finally leaving Randy Savage's side and no longer putting up with his roughhouse tactics, Elizabeth sent a clear message to the women of America: Don't allow a man to bully you. We were all disgusted by Savage's treatment of Elizabeth at WrestleMania V. We couldn't believe that he threw her across the dressing room back in February. We were hoping she'd take action, and she has, difficult though it must have been. Elizabeth is a truly courageous woman.

Thumbs Up to Antonio Inoki. We had heard about his brave performance against Russian Olympian Shota Chochoshivili on the April 24 card at the Tokyo Egg Dome (Chochoshivili is a judo and martial arts expert), but we didn't realize what Inoki did until we saw it for ourselves. In round two of their special 10-round match, Chochoshivili broke Inoki's left arm with a cross-armbar. But Inoki wouldn't quit. He fought on into the fifth round—that's nine more minutes—before finally succumbing. And his reason for fighting on was even more admirable: "I couldn't let down my fans," the legend said. Incredible!



Thumbs Up to Wendell Cooley. Get on your knees, clasp your hands together, and say "thank you," because "Wildcat" Wendell Cooley is the Continental heavyweight champion. Cooley's reign, which began on April 7 with a victory over Tom Prichard, has restored much-needed order to Continental wrestling. Prichard was a devious slime who would stop at nothing to retain his title; outside interference was the norm. Cheating was never beyond him. With Cooley, a man who fans and fellow wrestlers can trust has the belt. We wish him a lengthy and successful reign.

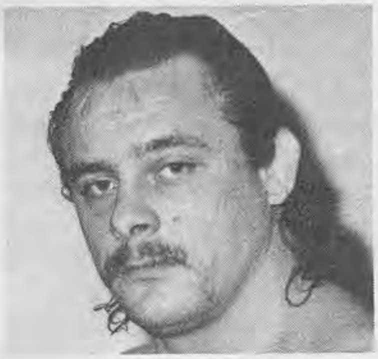
Thumbs Up to Eddie Gilbert. So often—and so unfortunately—a wrestler's switch from rulebreaker to fan favorite is accompanied by a loss of killer instinct. Not so in the case of "Hot Stuff" Eddie Gilbert, who's still the fiery, aggressive wrestler we've always known him to be. Recently, Gilbert's right knee blew out during a match against Jack Victory in Bluefield, West Virginia. This wasn't a major card, nor was it being televised. Gilbert could have quit, but he didn't. He continued to wrestle and actually beat his old rival, much to the fans' delight. Now *that's* heart.

Thumbs Down

Thumbs Down to Terry Funk. How could we *not* include Funk in our Hall of Shame? He's practically rewritten the book on despicable acts. We don't need to rehash what he has done. By now, everybody knows about his attack on Ric Flair May 7 in Nashville. What we really object to is the way he calls himself a hero and makes comparisons to John Wayne, one of the greatest movie stars of all time. Well, if Funk was in one of Wayne's movies, he'd be the outlaw, the villain, the dirty, rotten, good-for-nothing that makes you want to cheer even louder for his capture. Right now, we're cheering for Flair!

Thumbs Down to The Honky Tonk Man. The former WWF Intercontinental champion's recent attack on Jimmy Snuka is indicative of how far he has fallen. Honky Tonk is now so removed from Intercontinental title contention, it's hard to believe he was ever champion. He's not even close to being on the list of contenders for Hulk Hogan's World title. So, with few wrestling skills to help him gain attention, Honky Tonk resorted to an attack on Snuka. By the way, Honky Tonk's guitar is on our long list of items that don't belong anywhere near a wrestling ring. Ban the evil strummer!

Thumbs Down to Gen. Skandor Akbar. Enough is enough! When you get right down to it, all the trouble going on in World Class can be traced back to one man: Akbar. Get rid of him and everything is back to normal. The leader of Devastation Inc. is nothing but evil—has been for many years—and the Harold T. Harris situation shouldn't come as a surprise. It now appears clear that Akbar had this "referee" in his pocket all along. Now Harris is a member of Akbar's army, and he has already taken part in his first heinous act: an attack on World Class official Frank Dusek. Disgusting.



Thumbs Down to Dynamite Kid. Jealousy reared its ugly head, and Dynamite Kid has nothing to be proud of. We can understand why he's so upset over the injuries that threaten to force him into an early retirement. What we can't understand is this resentment he harbors toward his former British Bulldog partner, Davey Boy Smith. It is extremely sad to see this once-great tag team divided, and it's even sadder to see that they couldn't go out as friends. For this, we must blame Dynamite. Davey Boy has a life to live. He can't wait for Dynamite to catch up. □

CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

St. Louis, MO *(Correspondent—Paul B. Hon):* In his match against Brutus Beefcake, Randy "Macho Man" Savage showed the St. Louis fans that his return to rulebreaking is for real. And he relied on his new manager, "Sensational" Sherri Martel, to do his dirty work for him.

"Sensational" Sherri Martel points with pride to her man, Randy Savage. In a St. Louis match pitting the "Macho Man" against Brutus Beefcake, Martel got involved frequently, helping Savage win the encounter with "The Barber."

At the opening bell, Beefcake was preoccupied with Savage's manager, but he was successfully able to thwart an early attack by Savage. Beefcake lost his advantage, however, when Sherri grabbed his legs from outside the ring. Savage went on a brutal attack, frequently stopping to distract referee Dave Hebner while Sherri choked "The Barber."

Brutus went after Sherri outside the ring, which allowed Savage to sneak up and deliver a brutal axhandle to the back of Beefcake's head. Then Savage threw Beefcake back into the ring and delivered a flying axhandle.

But Savage pressed his luck too far when he tried another axhandle from the top rope. On his way down, Brutus hit him with a vicious chop. Beefcake whipped Savage into the ropes and caught him in a sleeper. After a tremendous struggle, Savage reached the ropes to break the hold. When the referee was checking Savage's condition, Sherri threw powder into "The Barber's" eyes, allowing Savage to roll him up for the pin.

In other bouts: Paul Roma beat Boris Zukhov . . . Dino Bravo pinned Hercules . . . Rockin' Robin beat Judy Martin . . . Warlord beat Koko B. Ware . . . The Bushwhackers defeated Tully Blanchard & Arn Anderson . . . Jake Roberts beat Ted DiBiase.

Milwaukee, WI *(Correspondent—Andy Abrahamson):* This taped-fist match pitted Rick Steiner against Butch Reed. Steiner took the early lead by continually

(Continued on page 50)

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Q: "I have a question for 'Doctor' Tom Prichard: Now that you've become a rulebreaker, are you going to eliminate men such as Wendell Cooley, Willie B. Hert, and Dan Davis on your way to becoming the greatest wrestler ever? No matter what people say, I think you were the finest CWF champion of all time."—Ed Thomas, Portland, OR

A: "Finally, a fan with something other than fat between his ears," responded Prichard. "You are completely correct, Ed, I *was* the greatest champion this sport has ever seen. There's no way a bum like Cooley ever should have defeated me for my CWF title, but it looks as if he paid off the referee, or some other such wrongdoing. You were right in believing that I should try to get rid of no-talent skunks like Davis and Hert, but right now my main priority is getting Cooley to give me a return bout. After I regain the title that's rightfully mine, I'll eliminate the other Continental garbage one by one. Then I'll be all alone at the top of the hill, where I should have been all along."

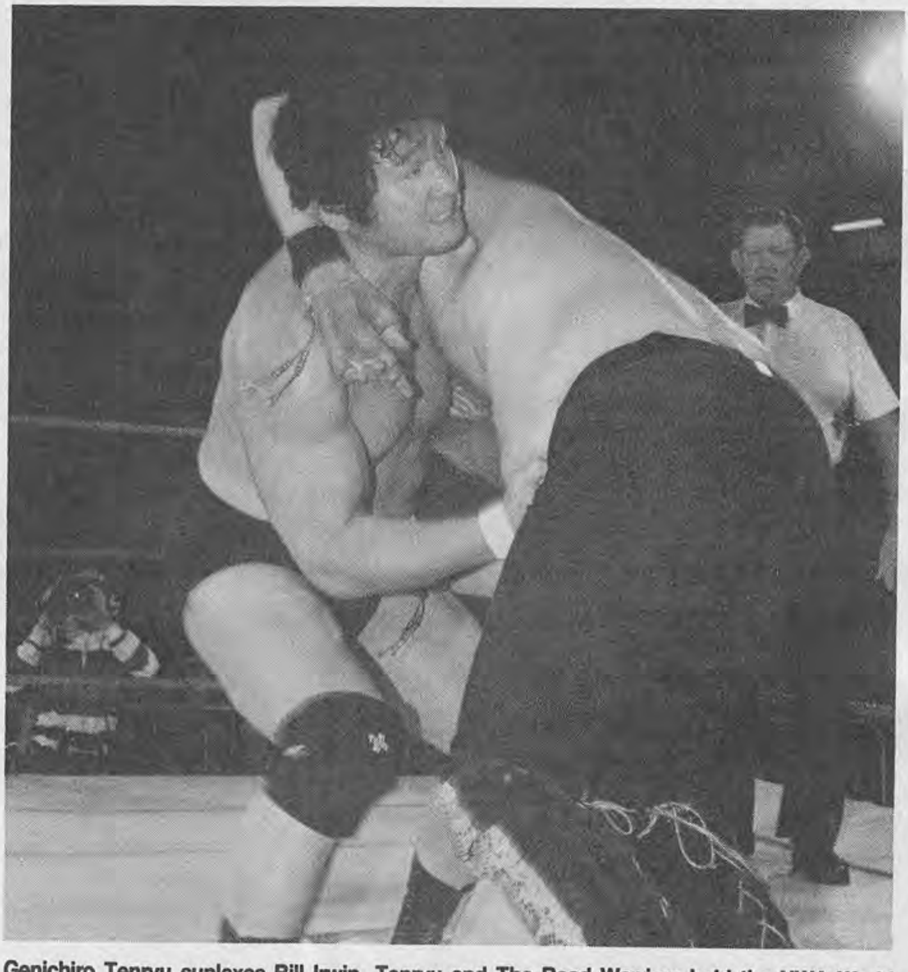
Tom Prichard lost the Continental title to Wendell Cooley, but insists he's the better wrestler. Prichard is also after Willie B. Hert and Dan Davis.

***

Q: "My question is for Road Warrior Hawk: Why hasn't your NWA six-man championship partner, Genichiro Tenryu, joined you in your battles against The Varsity Club? You must know that Kevin Sullivan, Steve Williams, and Mike Rotundo will never fight you two on two."—Scott O'Neill, Union, NJ

A: "This man Scott seems to be a pretty good strategist," yelled Hawk. "Tenryu has been very busy in Japan, or you know he would have been fighting right by our sides. Unfortunately, all of our matches against Sullivan and his dweebs have turned into three and even four men against us, now that Dan Spivey has joined 'em. Well, it *would* be easier for us if Tenryu was with us to battle 'em, but you don't understand the Road Warrior psyche. Animal and myself *should* be able to destroy four guys, especially no-talent bums like The Varsity Club. Just wait, Scott—pretty soon we'll retire all four of 'em at once, and you'll have something really special to cheer about."

(Continued on page 51)



Genichiro Tenryu suplexes Bill Irwin. Tenryu and The Road Warriors hold the NWA World six-man title, but they haven't defended it recently because Tenryu returned to Japan.

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January 1983/COLOR PINUP: Ken Patera. **Rick Steamboat**, Rich, Brody, Sullivan, Backlund.

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October 1983/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog. **Tommy Rich**, Johnson, Adonis, Rhodes, Piper.

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December 1983/COLOR PINUP: Wahoo McDaniel. **Dusty Rhodes**, Hayes, Steamboat, Hansen, DiBiase.

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July 1984/COLOR PINUP: Paul Ellering. **Jimmy Valiant**, JYD, Fab Ones, Gagne, Windham.

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October 1984/COLOR PINUP: Billy Jack. **Kerry Von Erich**, Martel, Blanchard, Fabulous Blonds, Armstrong.

November 1984/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel. **Sgt. Slaughter**, Von Erich, Road Warriors, Windham, Rotundo.

January 1985/COLOR PINUP: Tito Santana. **Road Warriors**, Billy Jack, Hayes, 1984 fan ballot.

February 1985/COLOR PINUP: Magnum T.A. **Rick Martel**, Hogan, Backlund, Ellering.

April 1985/COLOR PINUP: Ronnie Garvin. **Jimmy Snuka**, Warriors, Gordy, Flair, Rhodes.

June 1985/COLOR PINUP: Barry Windham. **Dusty Rhodes**, Slaughter, Hogan, Von Erich, T.A.

July 1985/COLOR PINUP: Sgt. Slaughter. **Hogan vs. Piper**, Warriors, One Man Gang, T.A., Martel.

September 1985/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog. **Magnum T.A.**, Von Erich, Hogan, AWA scouting reports.

October 1985/COLOR PINUP: Chris Adams. **Rick Steamboat**, Warriors, Nikita, WWF scouting reports.

November 1985/COLOR PINUP: Randy Savage. **Ric Flair**, Slaughter, Steamboat, World Class scouting reports.

December 1985/COLOR PINUP: Jesse Ventura. **Great American Bash**, Von Erich, Orndorff, Williams & DiBiase.

January 1986/COLOR PINUP: Hacksaw Duggan. **Hulk Hogan**, T.A., Brody.

AUGUST 1988

February 1986/COLOR PINUP: Nikita Koloff. **Mike Von Erich**, Warriors, Santana, Taylor, Barbarian, Race.

April 1986/COLOR PINUP: Ric Flair. **Wendi Richter**, Adams & Hernandez, Dusty & Warriors vs. Flair & Andersons.

May 1986/COLOR PINUP: Rick Steamboat. **Road Warriors**, Humongous, Bulldogs, Hansen vs. Martel.

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August 1986/COLOR PINUP: Dusty Rhodes. **Randy Savage**, Lugar vs. Race, Blanchard vs. Flair, Rude.

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INTRODUCING

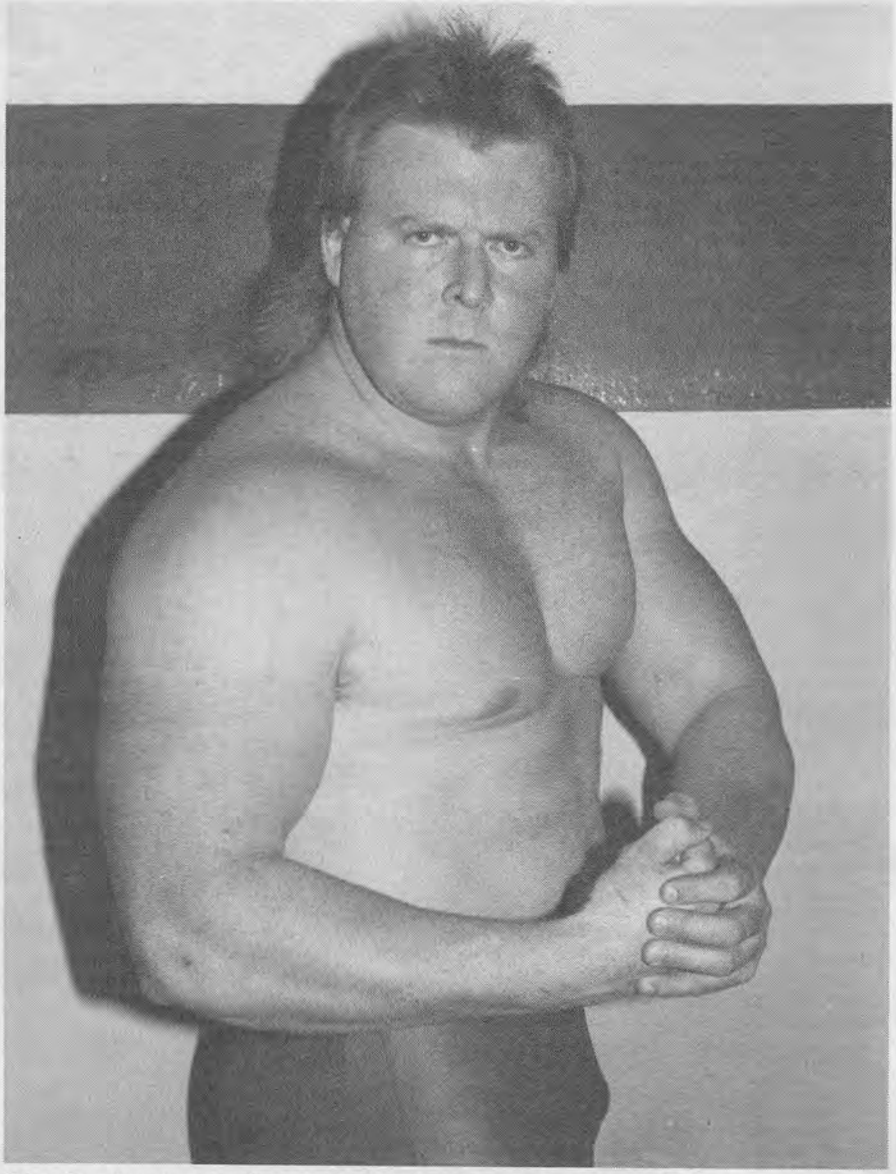
BRIAN DONOHUE

IT WAS ONLY his second professional match, but huge Brian Donohue was already proving he was a man to be feared. He had battled to a double-countout decision against young Mike Lafferty, but he wasn't nearly through with him. Grabbing his foe by the hair, Donohue led his opponent across the arena and smashed his head into a wall, leaving Lafferty nearly unconscious.

"How *dare* such a punk challenge me," growled Donohue, who at 26 appears ready to make his presence known in the wrestling world. "I might be just starting out, but I'm *already* becoming feared. Not a lot of people can challenge a man of my size, and if they do, they'll end up like Lafferty—dazed and confused."

The 6'4", 310-pound Donohue, who currently is splitting his time between pro wrestling and playing in the Canadian Football League, has overcome adversity throughout his career. The latest multisport standout to try his hand at grappling, this giant Boston native shows a degree of intensity in the ring that belies the fact that he's had only a handful of

(Continued on page 48)



Brian Donohue is not only a professional wrestler, he's a pro football player. Donohue, a defensive lineman in the Canadian Football League, doesn't like being compared with other football players who've become grapplers.

Brian Donohue is the latest football star to make a splash in the wrestling world. At 6'4" and 310 pounds, Donohue is already being compared to former gridiron stars Ernie Ladd and Wahoo McDaniel. Incredibly, this rugged newcomer is not flattered by the comparison!

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Q&A

Each month, *The Wrestler* will present a "Question and Answer" forum with an important figure in the wrestling world. It is your chance to meet wrestling's biggest stars as they answer the questions uppermost in the fans' minds

World Class champion Jerry Lawler tries to choke Matt Borne with a TV cable, but he's stopped by referee Bronco Lubich. Lawler resorts to illegal tactics much more quickly in World Class than he does in his home area of Memphis.

Q: Once again, Jerry Lawler retains his title by the skin of his teeth. I've never seen a champion with so much luck. Especially in the World Class area, where a disqualification is supposed to result in the forfeiture of your title. I must admit I'm impressed with your wiles.

A: What wiles are those? Am I wily because I'm a better wrestler than anyone else in the state of Texas? For the life of me, I can't understand the difference in the fans there and in Tennessee. At least in Memphis, the people understand where I'm coming from.

Q: That's true. But in World Class, *nobody* can figure out what you're all about. Take that match against Borne, for instance. It was clear to everybody in the arena that your foot was on the ropes for leverage when you pinned Matt to win the first fall.

A: That's true. But even *you* would have to admit that Borne did the exact same thing to win the second fall. Now, did he or didn't he?

Q: Sure he did, but he was returning your favor, I think. Then, in the third fall, you had your foot on the ropes when Borne pinned you, but Lubich failed to see it. It was only when Frank Dusek and the other World Class officials saw a photo of the pin the next day that they overturned Lubich's decision. You must have been born under a lucky star or something.

A: Luck had nothing to do with it. Ring smarts is what this story is all

JERRY LAWLER

HE'S LONG BEEN known as "The King," but a better nickname for Jerry Lawler lately might be "Mr. Lucky." The Memphis native has held the World Class title since defeating Kerry Von Erich at SuperClash III on December 13, 1988, and he must have known from the outset that this title reign was blessed. After all, Lawler was on the verge of defeat when referee Marty Miller awarded him the bout because of excessive bleeding on Von Erich's part.

Since then, Lawler has held the belt throught a blend of guile, rulebreaking, and sheer luck. On May 12 in Dallas, for example, a reversed decision allowed him to keep his title once again: After Lawler and challenger Matt Borne split the first two falls of a three-fall match, the controversy began.

Borne again pinned Lawler, but referee Bronco Lubich didn't see Lawler's foot on the ropes. The Sportatorium crowd erupted with happiness when Borne was awarded the belt, but again Lawler's luck proved to be uncanny. The next day, a photograph of Lawler's foot on the ropes was presented to World Class officials. The title belt was returned to Lawler later that day.

Associate Editor David Rosenbaum was in Memphis to speak to Lawler about his latest bouts, as well as the peculiar personality traits of the man who is concurrently the most popular man in the CWA and the most vicious rulebreaker in World Class.

Borne has Lawler covered for the pin, but "The King" has his foot on the ropes (above). Borne was awarded the World Class belt—until photographic evidence of the illegal pin was presented and the title was given back to Lawler the next day. Lawler has his archrival Kerry Von Erich in a sleeper (right).

about, Davey, and don't you forget it. Draping the ropes with any body part during a pinfall is a legal way to avoid being counted out, and I just did what any wrestler with a shred of brains would have done. I can't help it if old man Lubich can't bend over properly anymore and couldn't see the foot. If that match were held in the CWA, you'd have seen a younger, more athletic referee catch it right away. Thank goodness for cameras, eh?

Q: I guess. But even all the luck you've experienced over the last few months doesn't excuse your callous actions in the World Class area. During one match in April, you smuggled a spoon into the ring and used it to carve several bloody gashes in the head of Kerry Von Erich. Why do you turn into such an animal when you . . .

A: I don't wrestle any differently against Kerry than I do against anyone else.

Q: Oh, come on now! The reason Marty Miller stopped the SuperClash match is because Kerry was busted open by yet another foriegn object you brought to the ring. How do you explain that?

A: What foreign object? I'm afraid your mind has been poisoned by the inane ramblings of the Von

Lawler applies a wristlock against Dutch Mantel. Mantel is one of "The King's" more persistent contenders, but Lawler is also having a tough time with The Master of Pain, managed by CWA newcomer Ronald Gossett.

Erich family, Frank Dusek, and those other Texas stiffs. The only difference in the way I act in Texas and everywhere else is that I know I'll never get a fair shake. That was obvious from my very first appearance in the Sportatorium. Those Dallas dogs were dead-set against me from my very first appearance there, and for the life of me I can't figure out why.

Q: The experts can't figure out what's wrong with *you*. Our sister magazine *Wrestling Superstars* commissioned Dr. Sidney M. Basil for a psychological profile that appears in the Fall 1989 issue. Basil seems to think your split personality is because of the ways the Texas fans react to you.

A: **Yeah? Well, when I found out about that one I just about lost my lunch. I'm only gonna say this once. If you guys keep it up with those kinds of stories, you're gonna end up with one sweet lawsuit on your hands. That quack couldn't diagnose a cut finger, let alone a complex personality such as myself.**

Q: But why are you so beloved in the CWA and so totally different in World Class?

A: **Hey, the intelligent CWA fans don't seem to mind anything I do, right? That's because those folks have seen me fight to the ends of the earth against foes like Tommy Rich, Eddie Gilbert, Von Erich, and Bam Bam Bigelow over the past few years. They know all about the *real* Jerry Lawler. They know that I never stoop to violent tactics unless I'm provoked. And God knows I've been provoked plenty of times against Kerry.**

Q: I don't agree with that. I don't care what you say, you've been the first one to begin the violence in every bout I've seen you wrestle against Kerry. You must look at him like he's your biggest enemy.

A: **Nah, the guy is nothing. He doesn't pose even a minor threat to me, really. It's just that I love to go into the Sportatorium or Ft. Worth or one of those other barns and rile those hayseeds. Then when they start rooting for Kerry—for what reason I can't figure—I always manage to irk 'em even further by pinning his overrated carcass to the canvas.**

Q: Let's move on to something else. You've had quite a feud in Memphis with that huge 6'8" Master of Pain. In fact, after a recent match where you managed to pin him, he ganged up with his manager Ronnie Gossett, Phil Hickerson, Mr. Devastation, and The Samurai, and they injured you quite badly by pulling your legs around that ringpost. I'm surprised to see you up and around even now.

A: **So am I, really. Those guys came very close to doing to me what Tommy Rich and Austin Idol did to me two years ago. I ruptured a testicle back then, and they came within a millimeter of doing the same thing all over again. If it takes the last breath in my body, I'm gonna get rid of Master of Pain and his loudmouth manager.**

Q: Where exactly did Gossett come from, anyway?

A: **Damned if I know. That fat blimp just showed up on television one week as the new CWA color commentator. He was biased in his opinions, but I could accept that. What I *can't* accept, however, is when he started managing Master and began interfering in my matches. You would've figured a guy as big as Master wouldn't need outside interference, but it's clear he's got no guts.**

Q: He's not the only man that's after you in the CWA, though. Dutch Mantel is still claiming he should be the World Class champion.

A: **Well, Mantel is all talk and no action. You know, the one regret I had in winning the AWA World title . . .**

Q: Other than being stripped of it, you mean?

A: **Let me finish, here. Anyway, when I won that belt, I traveled the world to defend it. But while I was gone, things got a little out of hand in my home territory. Last year, it was Robert Fuller's Stud Stable that was causing most of the trouble. Now you've got Gossett *and* Fuller, which means that the rulebreakers are getting harder to deal with than ever. That's why I've resolved to spend a little more time in the CWA than I have recently. There's too much garbage going on that I just don't agree with.**

Q: I'm so confused. This has only been one interview, but I feel like I've been talking to two different men. I still don't understand how you can be so different in different areas.

A: **That's because there's no real difference at all. I do what I have to do at all times. You may think I've gone a bit haywire, but in reality the only difference is in the way the fans perceive me.**

Q: I've got a loaded question for you before we wrap this up. How do you feel now that Joe Blanchard has been named president of the AWA?

A: **I don't really know how to react to that. I'm so far out of the AWA picture now, and I can't say that I really care to go back to it. I was the only honorable AWA World champion of the last decade. I wore that belt with pride, and I took it upon myself to defend it all over the world against the best contenders everywhere. I increased the value of that belt so much that I made the AWA title the equal of any title in wrestling. So what did I get for my trouble? Shafted, that's what. As far as I'm concerned, they can take their title and stick it. It'll never be a real world title again unless I'm holding it.** □

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SUMMER 1984/Stories include: JYD, Flair-Race, Adams-Garvin, Snuka, Idol, Orndorff.

FALL 1984/Stories include: Hogan, David Von Erich, Flair-Brody, Blanchard, Rude, Valiant.

WINTER 1984/Stories include: Kerry Von Erich, Martel-Bockwinkel, Piper, Flair-Steamboat, Freebirds.

SPRING 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Hogan, Albano, Rhodes, Sullivan, Backlund, WWF vs. NWA.

SUMMER 1985/Stories include: Valentine, Windham & Rotundo, Warriors, Flair-Race, Nikita, Adams.

FALL 1985/Stories include: Von Erichs, Warriors, Hogan-Volkoff, Freebirds, Magnum, Zbyszko, Garvin.

WINTER 1985/Stories include: Orndorff, Warriors, Brody, Shultz, Duggan, Brody, Steele, Piper.

SPRING 1986/Stories include: R&R Express, Warriors, Hogan, Santana, Rude, Williams, Cornette, Flair.

SUMMER 1986/Stories include: Warriors-Russians, Savage-Hogan, Kevin Von Erich, Bulldogs, Crockett.

FALL 1986/Stories include: R&R Express, Luger, Savage, Bulldogs, Hansen, Rude, Williams.

WINTER 1986/Stories include: Supercards, Hogan, Horsemen, Snuka, Von Erich, Rude, Cornette.

SPRING 1987/Stories include: Bigelow, Flair, Hogan, Luger, Race, Windham, Hyatt, DeBeers, Snuka.

SUMMER 1987/Stories include: Windham, Elizabeth, Superpowers, Albano, Von Erich, Williams.

FALL 1987/Stories include: Midnights, Flair, Steamboat-Savage, Luger, Piper, Hogan-Andre, Parsons.

WINTER 1987/Stories include: Luger-Nikita, Express, Hart, Hogan, Hyatt, Lawler, Rotundo, Lane.

SPRING 1988/Stories include: Warriors, Hogan-Andre, DiBiase, Honky Tonk, T.A., War Games.

SUMMER 1988/Stories include: Luger, Hogan, Cornette, Hennig, Bigelow, Hyatt, Rude, Strike Force.

FALL 1988/Stories include: Luger, Hogan, DiBiase, Kerry & Hayes, Sting, Savage, Paul E., Gilbert.

WINTER 1988/Stories include: Sting, Hyatt, Dusty, Roberts, Ultimate, Powers of Pain, Hayes, Garvin.

SPRING 1989/Stories include: Savage, Bossman, Sting, Lawler, Hogan, Luger, Hyatt, Anderson, Parsons.

SUMMER 1989/Stories include: Steamboat, Hogan, Rotundo-Steiner, Warriors, Duggan, Turner, Taylor.

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Wrestler

SPOT LIGHTS...

From time to time, *The Wrestler* will shine its spotlight on an outstanding wrestler, manager, or tag team. These are unforgettable highlights of the sport's greatest stars, compiled by the largest staff of editors and photographers in wrestling journalism

JESSE VENTURA

JESSE "THE BODY" Ventura was a successful wrestler for many years, but he has achieved his greatest fame as an announcer on WWF telecasts, having cultivated a reputation as both uniquely entertaining and insightfully honest.

Ventura's active wrestling career was a great one. It began in 1975, several years after he completed his tour in Vietnam as a Navy Seal. His first major title came on July 20, 1980, when he and Adrian Adonis—known as the "East-West Connection"—were awarded the AWA World tag team title by default when Verne Gagne failed to join his partner Mad Dog Vachon for a title defense in Denver. Ventura and Adonis defended the belts for 11 months before losing to Greg Gagne and Jim Brunzell in Green Bay, Wisconsin, on June 14, 1981.

The duo then traveled to the WWF, first wrestling singly. Managed by Fred Blassie, they teamed up again and nearly won the WWF tag title. Also around that time, "The Body" was receiving shots at World champion Bob Backlund.

Late in 1982, Ventura returned to the AWA and wrestled Hulk Hogan, who was the top contender to Nick Bockwinkel's World title. Their confrontation initiated a level of hostility between the two that still exists today.

While in the Mid-Southern area in 1983 and '84, Ventura was managed by Jimmy Hart and won the Mid-Southern heavyweight title. In mid-1984 he returned to the WWF and challenged Ivan Putski to a series of arm-wrestling contests. Eventually, he earned a title shot against Hulk Hogan. But then illness struck: Doctors discovered blood clots in Ventura's lungs. Jesse has speculated that his ailment may have been caused by exposure to the defoliant agent orange while he was in Vietnam.

Jesse Ventura (right, with Bruno Sammartino and Vince McMahon) has been a regular part of WWF telecasts since 1985, when he completed his active wrestling career.

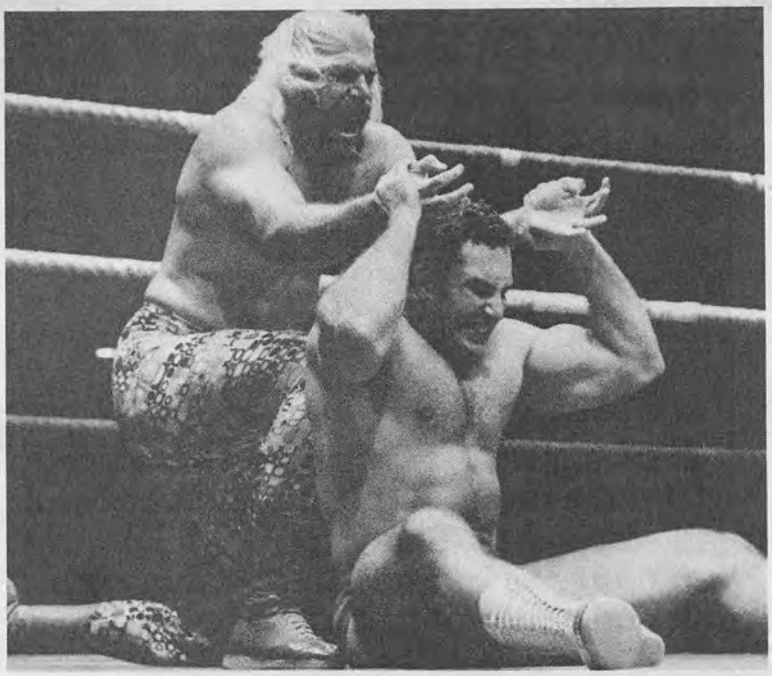
As Ventura recuperated, he began doing some announcing. He quickly became popular with fans who appreciated his tell-it-like-it-is style. He was one of the featured announcers at the first WrestleMania, and he has called every WrestleMania since then.

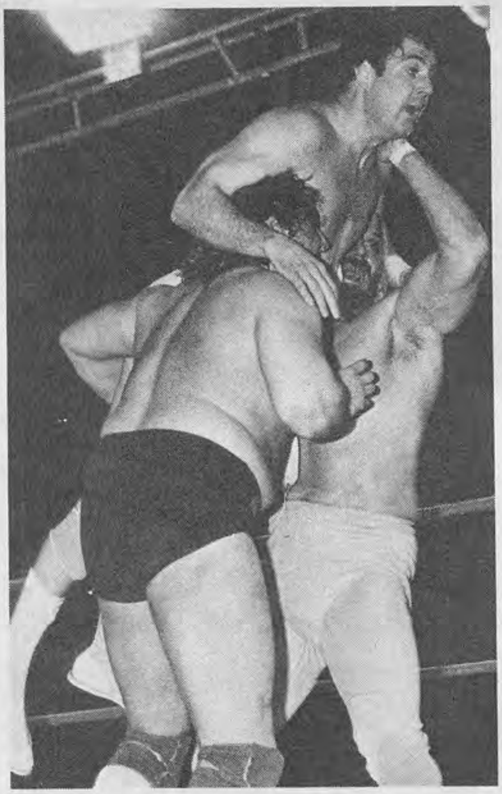
Ventura is also an accomplished actor who has appeared in several movies, including **Predator** *and* **The Running Man**, *both with Arnold Schwarzenegger. In an interview in* **Wrestling 87**, *Ventura said that if he ever had to choose between a career in Hollywood and a career behind the mike, he would choose Hollywood.*

Always one to boast, Ventura once "guaranteed" that if Schwarzenegger agreed to train him for four months, he would come out of retirement and beat Hogan. "I watch everyone in the WWF," he said, "and I watch them closely. I know Hogan's weaknesses. I'm not gonna say what it is, but he has one."

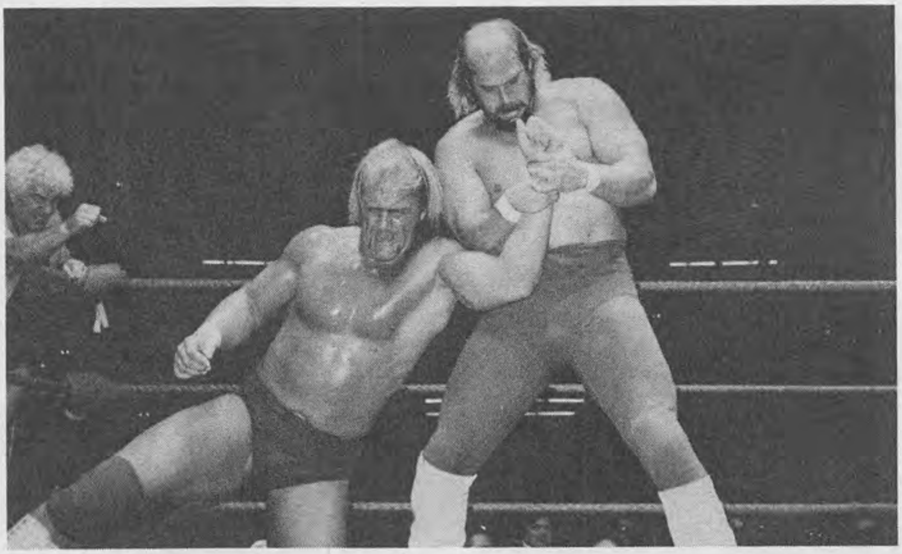
Jesse hasn't wrestled Hogan again since 1984, but he has been in the ring with the "Hulkster" as a referee. Last year, he officiated the match pitting Hogan and Savage against Ted DiBiase and Andre the Giant at SummerSlam 88.

As Ventura continues to inform and amuse fans with his outrageous comments, **The Wrestler** *takes a look at the highlights of his controversial career.*





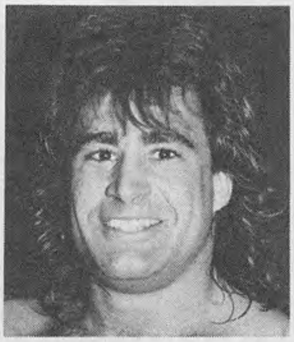
January 1980: Paul Ellering resists Ventura's grasp (above). February 1981: Adrian Adonis and Ventura double-team Greg Gagne (right); at the time Ventura and Adonis were AWA World tag team champs. May 1985: Jesse wristlocks Hulk Hogan during a tag match (below right).



December 1981: Jesse bearhugs WWF champion Bob Backlund (above). September 1983: Ventura legdrops Jerry Lawler (right); Jesse was managed by Jimmy Hart in the Mid-Southern area. 1987: Ventura plays a mercenary in *Predator* (far right).

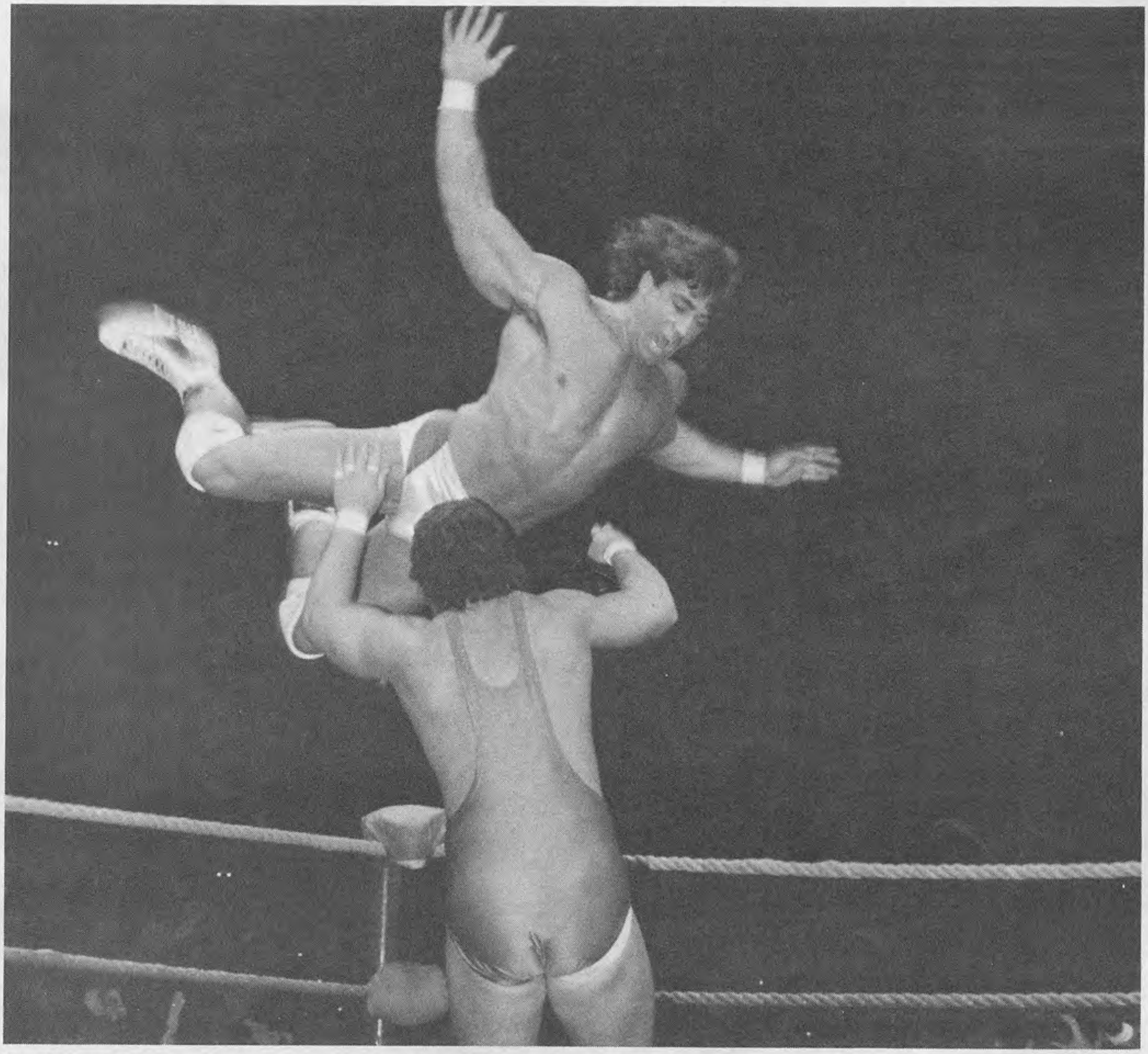
THE WRESTLER PANEL EXAMINES

X-RAY



TOM ZENK

Each month THE WRESTLER'S panel of experts will offer their candid opinions of one of wrestling's stars. Whether an up-and- coming youngster or an established superstar in his own right, our panel will always be frank and honest without fear of reprisal



The flying bodypress is just one maneuver that Tom Zenk can execute well. Zenk, a top contender to Larry Zbyszko's AWA World heavyweight title, is also a fine tag team wrestler.

CAPT. LOU ALBANO

"What a credit this kid is to this great sport. He's handsome, so all the young girls flock to the arenas to see him, but there's much more to Tom than just a pretty face. He's got blazing speed, impressive strength, and an incredible amount of knowledge for such a young guy—and he's in the right place at the right time now. If he can just get a fair match from Larry Zbyszko, there's gonna be a new AWA World champion, daddy."

Capt. Lou Albano, long known as "The Guiding Light," has guided 13 tag teams to an unmatched 16 WWF World tag team titles.

KILLER KOWALSKI

"Last month Jeff Jarrett, this month Tom Zenk, eh? What's the matter—run out of *real* men to put in this column? Zenk is enthusiastic and he's very strong, but he never seems to want to stay in one place for very long. To me, that shows signs of cowardice, and I'd be willing to bet he'll be up to his old tricks before long. He'll boast and brag, but when Zbyszko starts to put the pressure on him, he'll run out of the AWA fast. Zenk's just a gutless bum."

Killer Kowalski, one of the most sadistic rulebreakers in the sport's history, runs a wrestling school in Reading, Massachusetts.

PROF. TORU TANAKA

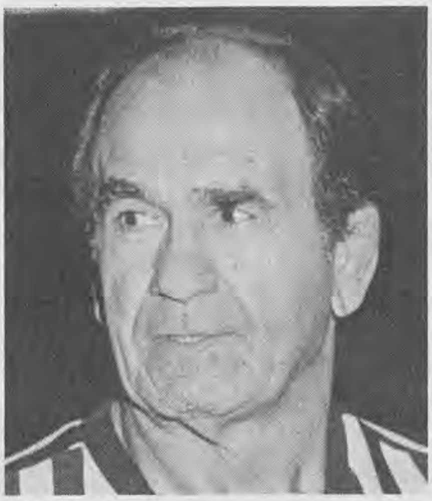
"It goes against many of my previous statements to say it, but Zenk shows promise for a scientific wrestler. Recently, he ventured to Japan and fared extremely well against many of the Orient's finest competitors. But, like other soft Americans, he tries to cater to the fans too much for my taste. He should follow the lead of his former partner, Rick Martel, who now is enjoying the spoils of success since learning how to bend the rulebook a bit more."

Prof. Tanaka, a three-time co-holder of the WWF World tag team title with Mr. Fuji, is currently a successful actor.

LARRY HENNIG

"The only thing worse than an ordinary wimp is an *AWA* wimp. Zenk was a contender a couple years ago when my son, Curt, was reigning as the AWA World champion. Never gave Curt a decent match, though. I don't think this guy is gonna be able to give Zbyszko any kind of challenge for the title at all. Instead, Zenk should set his sights on Greg Gagne's AWA TV title. Then, the whole world can thrill to the sight of the sport's two biggest sissies in the same ring."

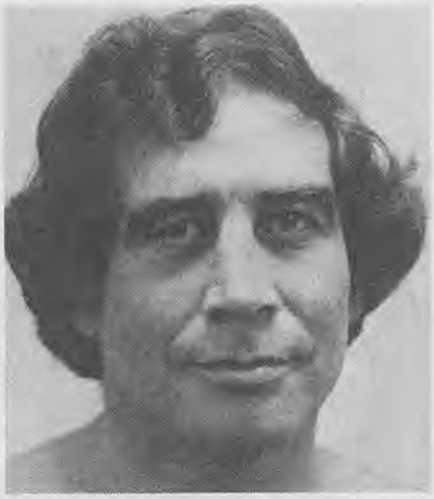
Larry "The Ax" Hennig is a four-time former AWA World tag team champion; he held three of those titles with Harley Race.



LOU THESZ

"There aren't many wrestlers like Zenk around anymore. I remember when he was a rookie back in 1984, he used to take quite a beating at the hands of some rugged veterans. An experience like that would drive lesser youngsters into early retirement, but Tommy persevered. He's improved every year, and his physique looks better every time I see him. Tommy's also a great young man to know outside the ring, and I hope his hard work pays off soon."

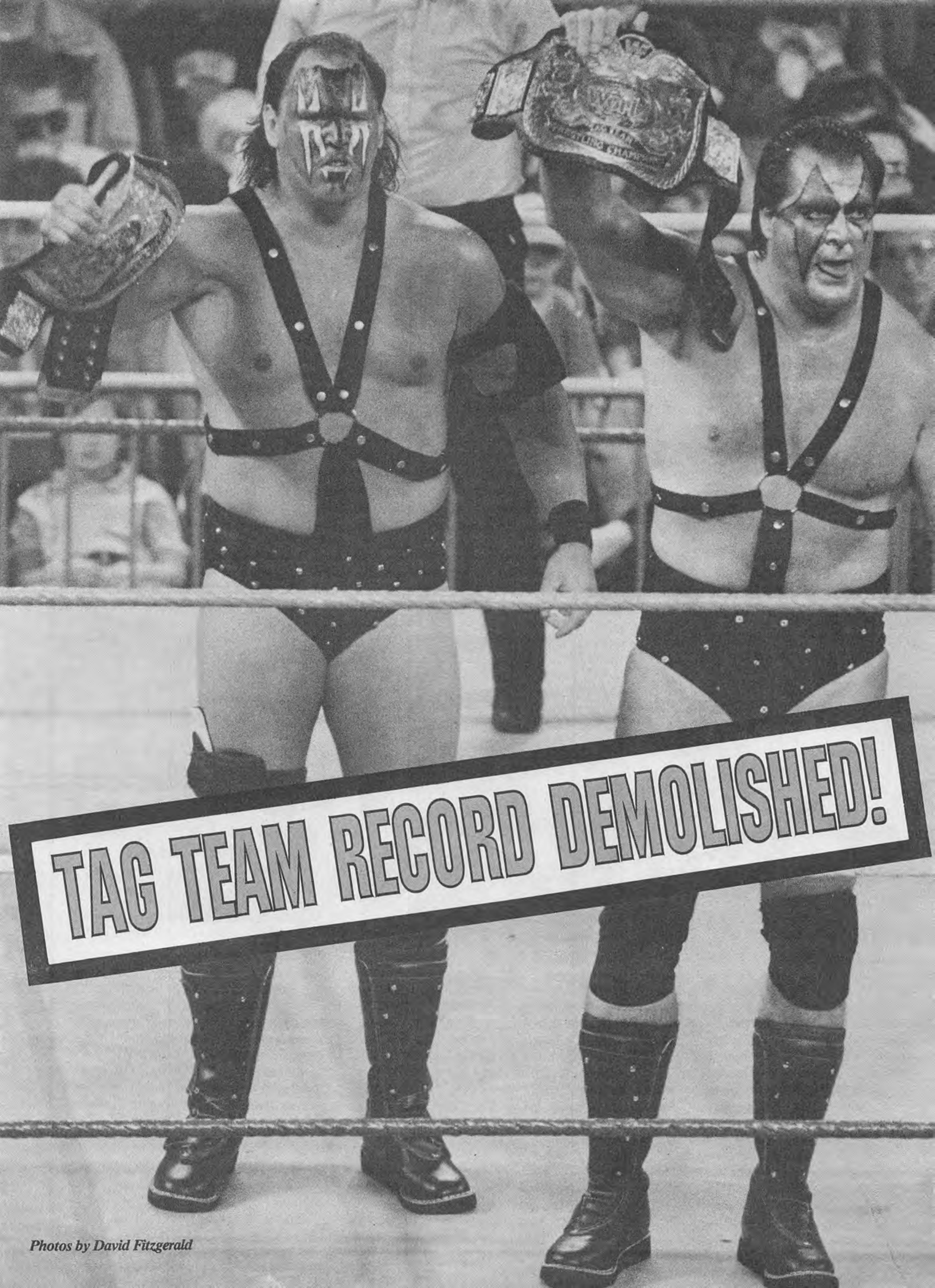
Lou Thesz held the NWA World title six times during his fabulous 50-year career. Many consider him the greatest all-round wrestler in history.



JACK BRISCO

"What a wrestler Zenk has become recently! He took a lot of criticism when he left the Can-Am Connection a couple of years ago, but this is one man who should never relegate himself to tag team matches ever again. He's got the perfect body for wrestling, and he's got enough stamina and skill to take on any man of any style. There's only a handful of wrestlers I think will rule the sport in the '90s, and Zenk is one of those few who will."

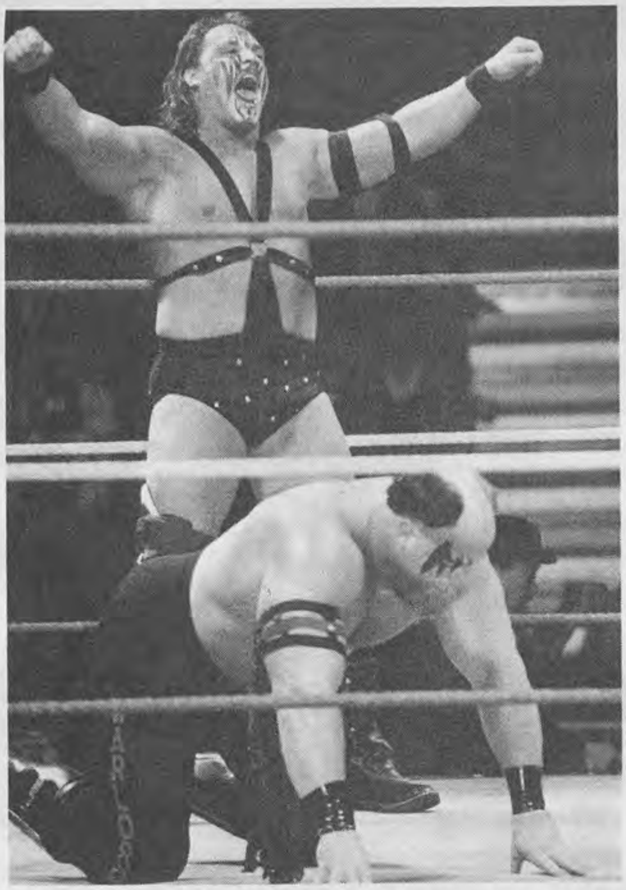
Jack Brisco is a two-time former NWA World champion, and a three-time former NWA World tag team champion with brother Jerry.



TAG TEAM RECORD DEMOLISHED!

Photos by David Fitzgerald

AX AND SMASH MAKE HISTORY-QUIETLY



Smash enjoys the advantage over Warlord. Despite a change of attitude, Demolition has held on to the WWF World tag team title longer than any other team.

By Bill Apter

IF A TREE falls in a forest and nobody's there, does it make any noise? Or, more pertinently, if a WWF tag team sets the record for longest championship reign and nobody says anything about it, has it really broken the record?

That question was on the minds of confused tag team aficionados when April 2 came and went without WWF officials and announcers noting Demolition's very notable feat. On that day, Ax and Smash's title reign reached one year and six days and became the longest in federation history, eclipsing the record held by Jimmy and Johnny Valiant since 1975.

So, to answer the question posed in the first paragraph: Yes, Demolition has *really* broken the record.

On March 27, 1988, at WrestleMania IV, Ax and Smash won the belts from Rick Martel and Tito Santana in what was considered to be a shocking upset. More than a year later, however, Ax and Smash have established themselves as the best team in the federation while Martel and Santana have broken up.

Ax and Smash have impressively handled every challenge they've faced. The Rockers, The British Bulldogs, Warlord and Barbarian, The Hart Foundation, and Strike Force have all been dealt with. Demolition has won with Mr. Fuji and without him. At WrestleMania V, the powerful duo overcame a two-on-three disadvantage against the Powers of Pain and Fuji to retain their belts. They have every right to call themselves the greatest WWF tag team of all time.

(Continued on page 52)

On April 2, 1989, Ax and Smash—a.k.a. Demolition—made history by becoming the longest-reigning WWF World tag team champions ever. But the WWF never acknowledged this feat, so, you, the fans, never knew it happened!

RODDY PIPER IS BACK!

After hinting for months that he might return to the sport, Roddy Piper has thrilled fans in Oregon and California by wrestling Nord the Barbarian and Ted DiBiase in matches. Could this mean the "Rowdy Scot" has designs on returning to the sport on a full-time basis?

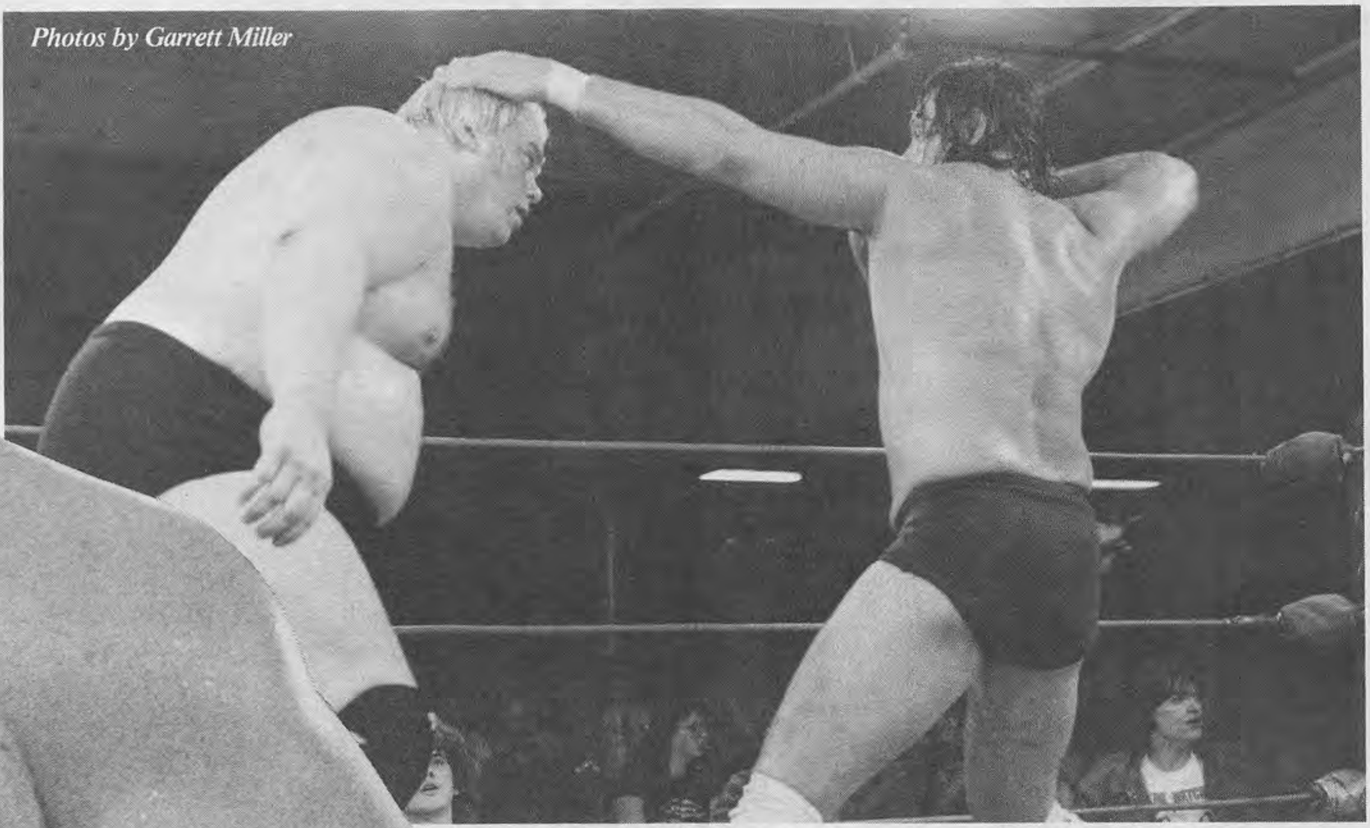
By Andy Rodriguez

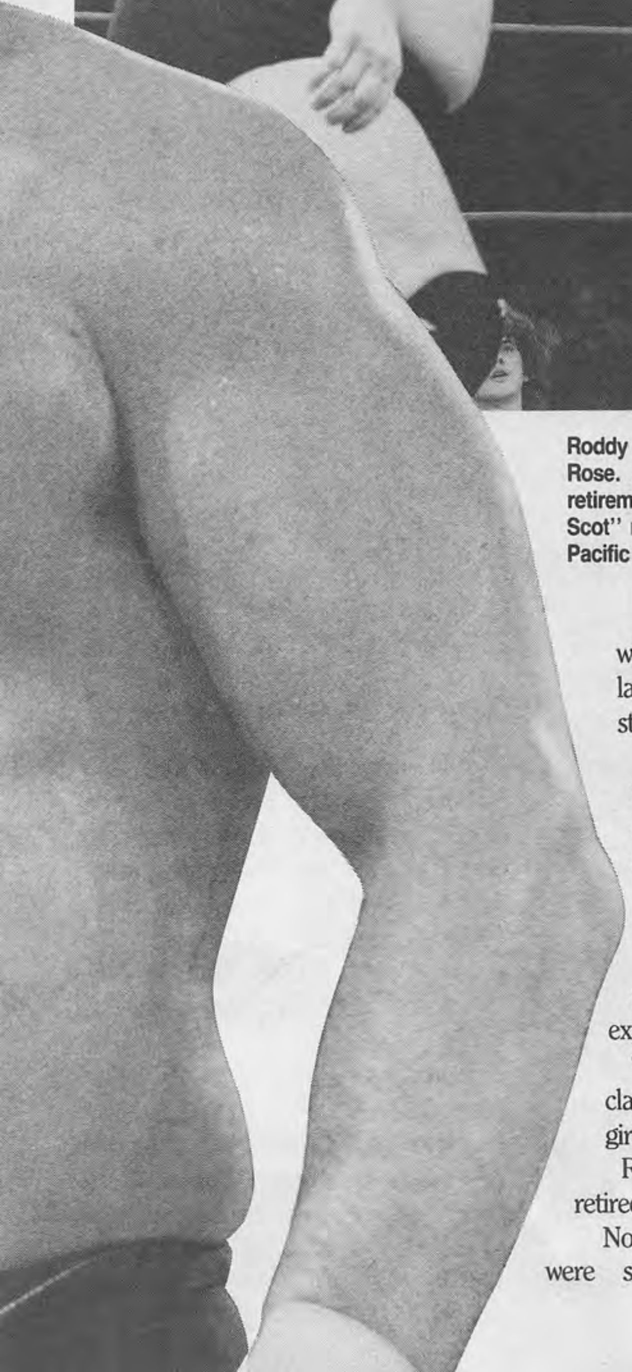
THE LOS ANGELES fans were standing on their chairs. It was announced that Jake Roberts was injured and couldn't make it to the arena for his scheduled bout against Ted DiBiase. DiBiase and his bodyguard, Virgil, stood in the center of the ring awaiting an opponent. The crowd was buzzing in anticipation.

"It's too bad Jake is out," moaned one young man to his date. "I was looking forward to seeing him get even

"I'm Addicted To Wrestling!"

Photos by Garrett Miller





Roddy Piper takes a swing at Buddy Rose. Although he had announced his retirement two years ago, the "Rowdy Scot" recently wrestled in the WWF and Pacific Northwest.

with that no-good 'Million-Dollar' bum. I wonder who'll substitute for him."

After several minutes of near silence, a lone figure dressed in a red kilt ambled out of the dressing room and strolled toward the ring. The sound of bagpipes blared in the background. A wry smile crossed his lips as the arena exploded in cheers of adulation.

"Wow, I can't *believe* it!" exclaimed the young man's girlfriend. "It's him, it's him! It's Roddy Piper! I thought he was retired for life! This is great!"

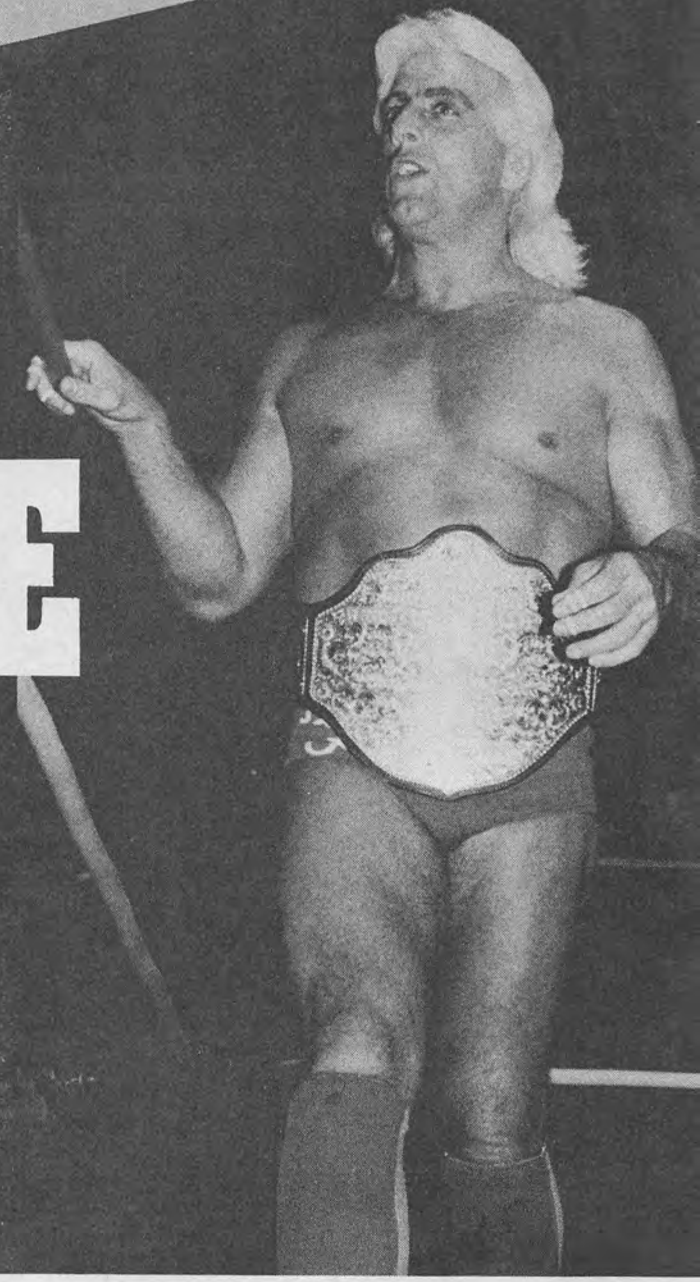
No one could believe what they were seeing. Without fanfare, the controversial Piper had returned to the WWF. On successive nights in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento, Piper stunned California fans by meeting—and defeating—DiBiase, one of the federation's premier competitors. The memories of Piper's classic feuds against Jimmy Snuka, Adrian Adonis, and Hulk Hogan came rushing back with each successful maneuver he employed. Even after a layoff of more than two years, it was clear he was as competitive as ever.

What makes this return so surprising is that it was beginning to look like Piper's retirement would never end. After defeating Adrian Adonis in his retirement match at WrestleMania III on March 29, 1987, the "Rowdy Scot" had kept a low profile, preferring acting in feature films to performing in the squared circle. When his science-fiction thriller, *They Live,* soared to the top of the box-office charts last No-

(Continued on page 54)

Our Urgent Plea To Ric Flair:

DON'T WRESTLE TERRY FUNK



By Dave Rosenbaum

THE CLUES WERE there. Two days before he was scheduled to be one of three judges for the Ric Flair vs. Rick Steamboat NWA World title match in Nashville, Tennessee, Terry Funk did what Terry Funk has always done: act like the evil individual he is.

Funk was wrestling PWF champion Dusty Rhodes in a lights-out, bunkhouse Texas Death match at the James L. Knight Center in Miami when he sacrificed all chances he had of winning the title by hitting referee Mickey Jay.

Terry Funk disgraced wrestling before a national television audience. Now, incredibly, Funk wants wrestling to honor him with a series of title matches against NWA World champion Ric Flair! If this is allowed, a horrible precedent will be set

That was Friday night. By Sunday night, the whole world knew that Terry was angry.

The May 7 Flair-Steamboat match will be remembered as a wrestling classic in which Flair won his sixth World title. But it will also be remembered for a tremendously sordid episode that had very little to do with the grace, beauty, and excitement of two superb athletes performing at their very best. It will be remembered for what Terry Funk did to Flair.

Just the idea that Funk attacked a referee two days before he was to be a judge in an important match should have been enough for NWA officials to start looking for another judge. And the idea that people were surprised when Funk viciously attacked Flair, sidelining him for at least 60 days with a neck and back injury, is ludicrous when one takes this into account.

Now, after this criminal assault, after nearly putting an end to Flair's great career, Funk wants a shot at the World champion when he returns.

We say: No way!

Our urgent plea to Flair is this: Don't wrestle Terry Funk! He doesn't deserve to be in the same ring with you!

His actions since May 7, while disguised as an attempt to move up the top 10 ladder, have been repugnant. He has replaced wrestling with attempted massacre, acting like a slimmed-down version of Abdullah the Butcher with a devil-may-care attitude that has other wrestlers literally shaking in their boots, afraid to walk into the ring with this ex-champion-turned-madman.

"It was downright scary," Brad Armstrong said after getting beaten and battered by Funk. "Funk's always been a roughhouser, but this was ridiculous. The most frightening part is that you look in his eyes and see nothing. It's as if you can stare right into his soul, and what you see there ain't pretty."

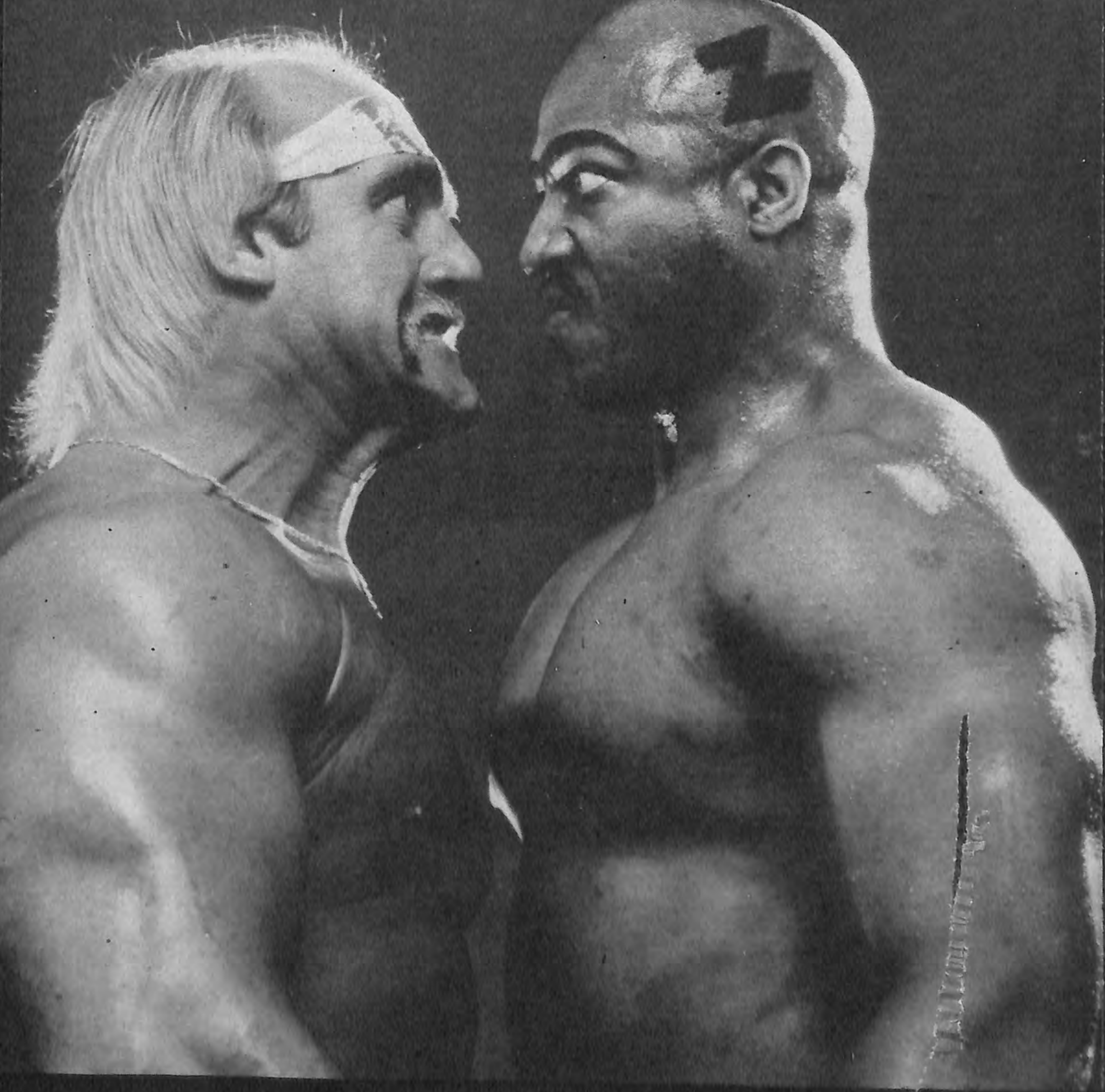
Armstrong, Johnny Rich, and Davey Rich were among several opponents Funk brutalized and humiliated over a two-day period,

(Continued on page 56)

Terry Funk appears in the ring to congratulate Ric Flair after Flair won his sixth NWA World title (left). Moments later, Funk attacks the champion (above). Funk's plan was to force Flair into giving him a title shot.

Photos by Bill Apter

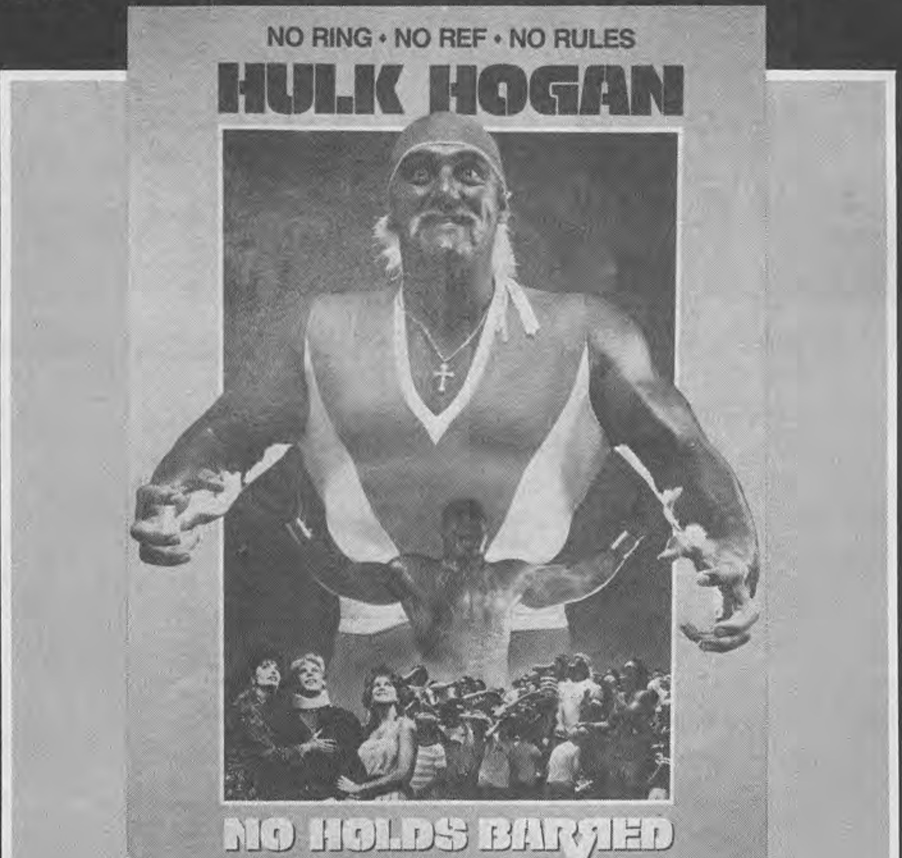
GET REAL, ZEUS–



There's a new contender threatening to do away with Hulk Hogan, but this time there's a twist. The man who was defeated by Hogan in the film *No Holds Barred* now wants to wrestle Hogan—in real life! As a novice to the sport, he is asking for the beating of a lifetime!

HULK HOGAN WILL TEAR YOU APART!

By Liz Hunter



Hulk Hogan wrestled—and defeated—Zeus (played by Tiny Lister) in the movie *No Holds Barred*. Now Zeus wants to wrestle Hogan for real.

THROUGHOUT HULK HOGAN'S championship career, there have been many huge contenders to his WWF World championship. Andre the Giant. John Studd. King Kong Bundy. Big Bossman. Each man was as skilled as he was huge, but somehow the 6'8", 302-pound champion found a way to defeat them all.

Now a new man has come into the WWF and is lusting for a shot at Hogan's gold belt—but this time, the man is not even a wrestler. He's an actor!

Tom "Tiny" Lister, who portrays the villainous character Zeus in the WWF-produced motion picture No Holds Barred, is an angry man. And he gets angrier each time he replays his videotape of the movie. The script called for Lister's character "Zeus" to be beaten up by Hogan in the climactic scene, and he doesn't like it one bit. In recent weeks, Lister (who demands to be called "Zeus") has made personal appearances at several WWF arenas, calling for the opportunity to meet—and defeat—Hogan in a one-on-one match.

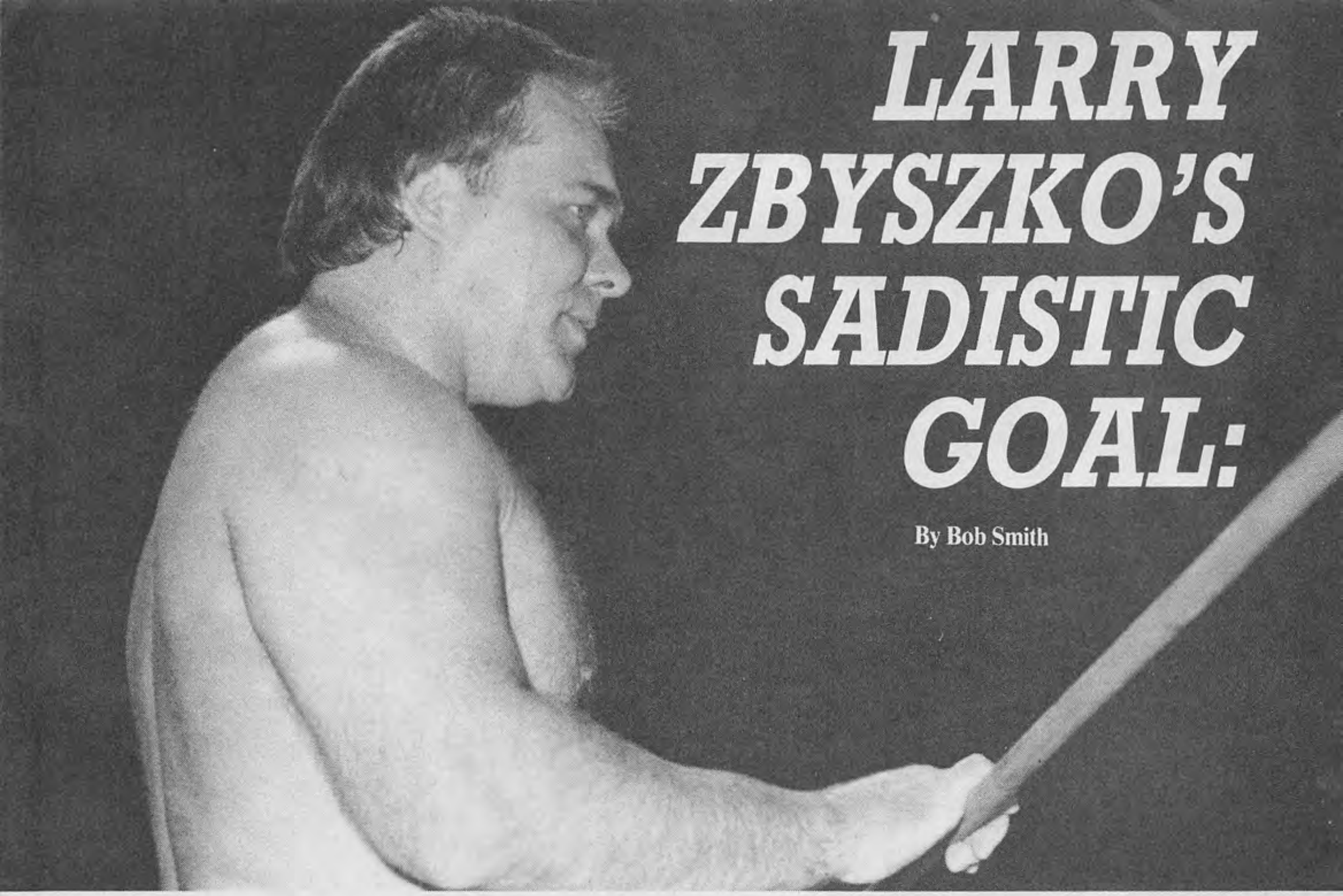
The oddest part of this whole scenario is that WWF officials may be starting to take Zeus seriously. The hottest rumor in the federation is that Zeus may soon get an opportunity to prove that he's a better man than Hogan. But this time, he'll be doing it in the squared circle, a place where Hogan has turned even rugged 400-pounders into the meekest of men.

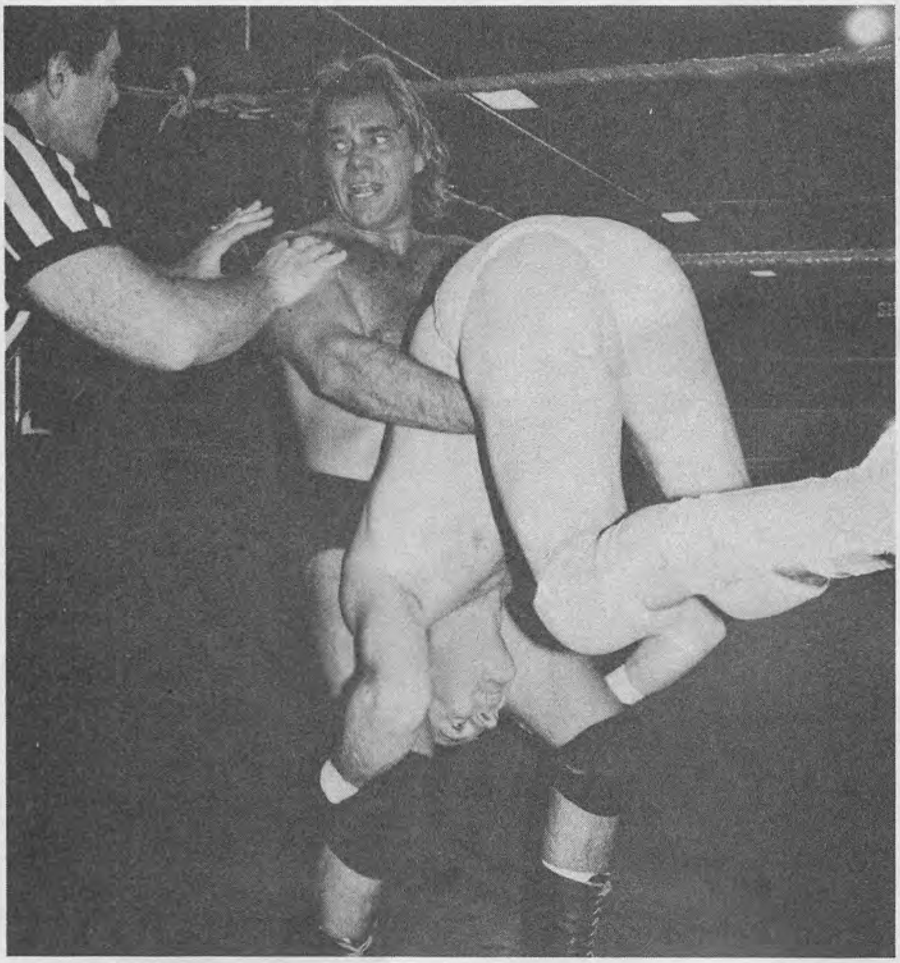
"I can't believe this jerk is getting a title shot," said one WWF wrestler who requested anonymity. "You work your butt off around here trying to work your way up, and along comes this lunatic who forgets the difference

(Continued on page 58)

LARRY ZBYSZKO'S SADISTIC GOAL:

By Bob Smith





"NOT ENOUGH," GRIPED Larry Zbyszko. "Not *nearly* enough. I beat him, sure, but I wasn't able to put him out of wrestling forever. Let me at him again! I'll *cripple* that daddy's boy! I'll show him what being a *real* man is like."

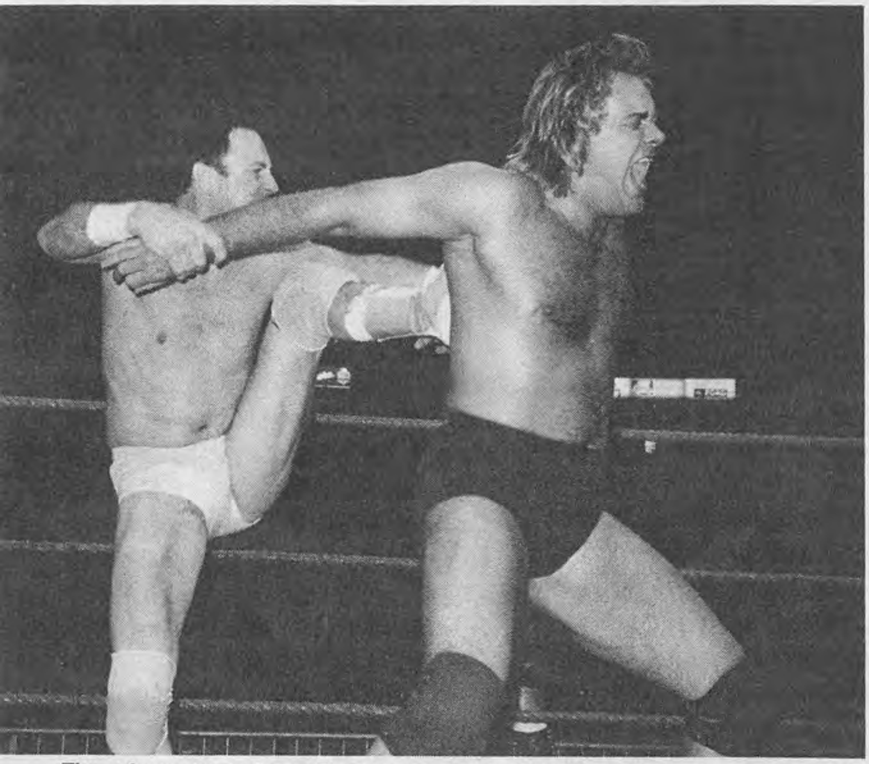
When AWA World champion Larry Zbyszko wrestled Mike Graham in Miami on May 5, it was a positively frightening scene to behold. Zbyszko used every opportunity he could to try to hurt his opponent in the most sadistic ways possible. Graham was forced to use some of the most brutal tactics he could muster, mainly because the match became a frantic battle for survival.

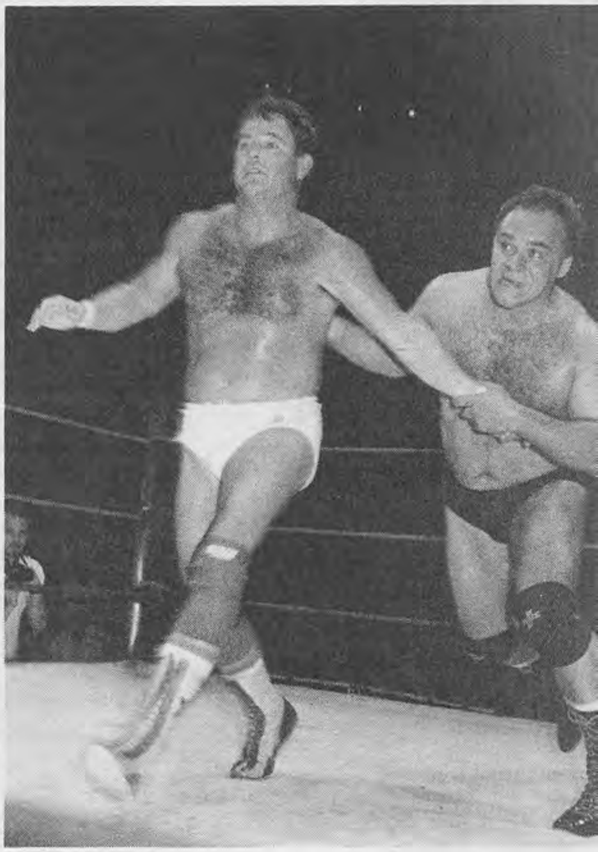
"What the hell is wrong with that guy?" asked Graham, who, ironically, lost by disqualification. "He wasn't trying to beat me—he was trying to *hurt* me. It was like he had a grudge against me, but what's *his* beef? What have I ever done to Zbyszko other than be a contender for his title?"

"It's bad enough Graham is such a no-talent creep," shouted Zbyszko af-

SECOND-GENERATION SLAUGHTER!

AWA World champion Larry Zbyszko seems more interested in crippling a select roster of opponents than he is in defending his title against top contenders. Will a quartet of second-generation stars be able to survive this all-out onslaught from the self-proclaimed "Living Legend"?





The referee warns Larry Zbyszko not to piledrive Greg Gagne (opposite page). Gagne retaliates with a surfboard (above). Zbyszko gets a thrill out of punishing wrestling's second-generation stars, like Gagne and Mike Graham (right).

ter the match. "He's just looking for his one-way ticket to Larry Land, lusting to ride the glory train to my title and to greatness. Unfortunately for him, I'm the conductor, and I'm not gonna sell any tickets to a jerk like that.

"I can take the fact that Graham wants to be a champion, but these guys who got a free ride to the top on a silver platter I *can't* take," he continued. "Fools like Graham, David Sammartino, Greg Gagne, and Dustin Rhodes. Not one of those idiots would have ever been a wrestler if it wasn't for their daddies holding their hands so they don't get hurt. Worthless wimps. I'll crush 'em all."

Throughout his career, Zbyszko has battled several second-generation wrestlers, and each has succeeded in giving him some of his toughest matches. Now that he's AWA World champion, he's out to end the careers of as many of these men as he can. Graham was his first goal, and when he failed to seriously hurt the Florida native during

Zbyszko holds David Sammartino in an abdominal stretch in this 1983 bout. Zbyszko's hatred of David stems from his feud with Bruno Sammartino in 1980. Larry despises the sons of wrestlers, claiming they've had an easy ride.

their match in Miami on May 5, Zbyszko was incensed. Since then, he's tried several times to secure additional bouts against Graham, the son of the legendary Eddie Graham.

Zbyszko's rage seems to stem from notable feuds from his past. The first was his classic series of bouts with David Sammartino in 1983. Before Zbyszko became a rulebreaker in 1980, Bruno Sammartino was like a father to Zbyszko. That would have made David like a brother.

"I know *exactly* why Larry's acting funny," said Sammartino, currently wrestling in the Southern Championship area. "Anytime the guy even *sees* someone whose father was a wrestler, he explodes with rage. I think I had a lot to do with that. It was only three years after my dad embarrassed him in a steel cage match at Shea Stadium that our feud began. Ask anyone who saw our matches, and they'll tell you I picked up where my father left off."

Sammartino believes that even though Zbyszko is now a World champion, he will feel he's a failure until he makes up for the losses of his past. "In every match, that coward ran from the ring when I mounted an offensive," Sammartino recalled. "I really embarrassed him."

Zbyszko vehemently disagrees with Sammartino's recollections. "That Italian punk was only out to avenge his father," said Zbyszko. "Didn't do such a hot job, did he? He turned out to be a real chip off the ol' block, which means he didn't have any talent either. I should have retired him the same way I ended the career of his old man."

In 1985, another second-generation superstar entered Zbyszko's life. His feud with Greg Gagne over the number-one contender's spot for the AWA World title continued unabated for almost two years. Now that he's AWA World champion, Zbyszko can't wait to get his hands on the son of nine-time champion Verne Gagne once again.

"This time, I'll finish him off for good," the champion threatened. "The very idea that little Greggie is the AWA TV champion insults me to the bone. He doesn't have nearly enough talent to be a ring attendant, let alone my top contender. And I'm tired of his fossilized old man getting on my case when he does color commentary on television, too."

Greg Gagne, who usually is able to keep a cool head, laughed off Zbyszko's crazed comments.

"He's only angry because I beat him several times a couple of years ago," he said. "I think the reason he despises men like myself and Graham so much is that, in his head, he thinks he's worked harder than anyone to get where he is, and sees us second-generation grapplers as having had an easy time of it. Well, we've probably worked harder than him; he's the guy who stalls half the time in the ring. He's one of the biggest cowards ever. I'll be happy to face him anytime he wants."

That seems to be exactly what Zbyszko wants. In fact, he's deluged promoters with requests to meet as many second-generation grapplers as he can. And his quest to meet these men is hurting Tom Zenk, who currently ranks as the number-two contender behind Gagne and has complained to AWA officials about the situation.

"Graham, Gagne, Sammartino, and Rhodes are all marked men," he laughed. "It's time for a *real* wrestler to prove that those who get by on their fathers' names will no longer be tolerated. This is *my* show now, so get in line, kiddies. The fun is about to begin." □

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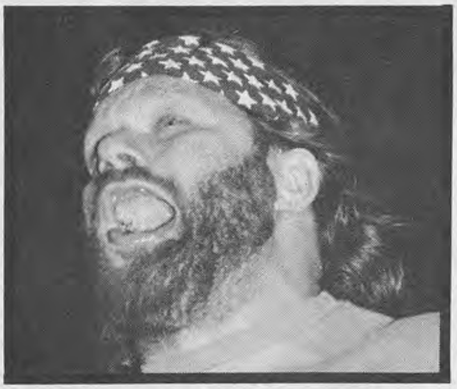

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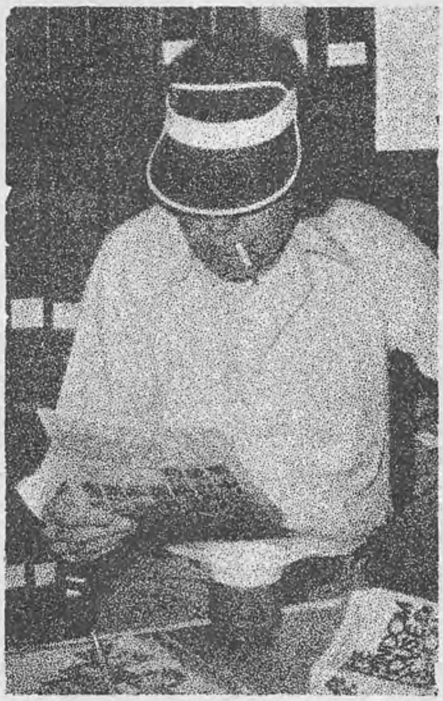
MATT BROCK'S LOOKING BACK



AUGUST 1978
DUSTY RHODES vs. SUPERSTAR GRAHAM

NOBODY SAW IT coming, so the news is hitting the sport like a tidal wave. Dusty Rhodes is back in the WWF, and everyone I've talked with seems pretty excited about it. I'll admit it's a stunning development, especially considering that Rhodes had been dominating the PWF in recent months. But what's bothering me is that most people are acting like this is the "American Dream's" first foray into the WWF, and nothing can be further from the truth.

Don't hold your breath for paid shill/TV host Gorilla Monsoon or WWF head honcho Vince McMahon to tell you this, but Rhodes was one of the most popular WWF—or maybe I should say *WWWF*—competitors from the mid-'70s through the early '80s. During that era, wrestlers were a lot more free to compete wherever they wanted, and Rhodes was a top contender for both the NWA and WWF World titles.

Naturally, the current WWF public-relations machine would never let you know he was ever there before. Instead, they're trying to imply that Rhodes is a newcomer to the federation. And while that's essentially true—at least as far as the last eight or nine years is concerned—it isn't precisely true. It's more accurate to say that Dusty is *returning* to the WWF.

Superstar Graham chokes Dusty Rhodes during their brutal Texas bullrope match at Madison Square Garden in 1978. Dusty called for this match after what happened in a bout a year earlier, when Graham sneak-attacked Dusty and hanged him with a rope.

For this tenure, I suggest that the "Dream" avoid the kind of feud he got into with Superstar Graham in 1977 and '78. I've seen more than my share of horrible wars, such as Tommy Rich vs. Buzz Sawyer and Abdullah

the Butcher vs. Bruiser Brody, but as far as sheer bloodletting goes, this series was far worse than either of those. Graham always accused Rhodes of copying his style (a ridiculous claim), while Dusty hated everything the rule-breaking Superstar stood for—especially when Graham held the WWWF World title.

These men were at the very top of their forms back then, and they started drenching canvases with crimson from their very first match. I'll never forget their first Madison Square Garden war back in February 1977. Graham began the match by sneak-attacking Dusty, and almost hanged the "Dream" with a rope he grabbed from underneath the ring.

Dusty's schedule wouldn't permit him to do what he *really* wanted in retaliation—a Texas bullrope match. Not right away, anyway. But in August 1978, in front of another packed Garden house, Rhodes got his hands on Graham once more. Even though Graham had lost the title to Bob Backlund by then, it didn't dilute the hatred these stars had for each other.

The biggest thing I recall about this match is how sickeningly bloody it was. It was the kind of battle that still gives me nightmares 11 years later. For minute after horrifying minute, Graham and Rhodes pounded each other with the cowbell attached to each end of the rope, opening what must have been a record number of gashes. I also remember that guest referee Jay Strongbow seemed to do his best to get in the way. The Indian was trying to enforce the rules in an environment that could only lead to total mayhem. The Chief should have just let these two savages go and hope for no casualties.

Dusty, however, wasn't about to get hurt. Using his wiles to score the victory, he threw Superstar under the bottom rope and tied the part of the rope attached to his wrist to the top turnbuckle. This way, Graham couldn't get back into the ring, and Strongbow immediately counted him out—a fast count, from where I was sitting. This set off a feud between Graham and Strongbow, but that's another story.

What's important to remember now is that this is a different WWF that Rhodes is entering today. He's not likely to get into any bullrope matches—thank goodness—but this is a federation where the silly scores more points than the skillful. Look at what's happened to Arn Anderson and Tully Blanchard, for instance. They're one of the finest teams anywhere, but it took them almost 10 months to receive World title matches against Demolition.

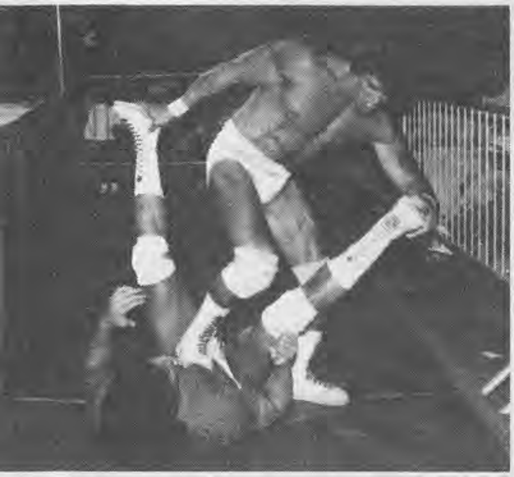
Dusty bloodies Graham with the cowbell tied to the rope (top left). Graham retaliates with a choke (above). Special referee Jay Strongbow counted out Graham after Dusty threw him out of the ring and tied the free end of the rope to the top turnbuckle.

Dusty, however, is much more of a showman than Tully and Arn. Today's WWF is a world where personality sells tickets, and few stars have had more personality than Rhodes. I can't see him *not* flourishing in such a colorful, wacky environment.

Something tells me Dusty's best days may still be ahead of him. □

YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 7)



Rick Martel attacks his former Strike Force partner, Tito Santana, outside the ring. Nevertheless, reader John Greeley continues to support Martel.

views was something I'd never seen before. Obviously, Rick is tired of being the one who is always injured, and now he wants to be the one that does the injuring.

Just who is responsible for the revitalization of Martel? I think it's Demolition. Martel no doubt still thirsts for revenge for the brutal and needless injuries he suffered at the hands of Ax and Smash. I'm sure that Martel didn't really want to turn against Tito Santana the way he did, but it was the first step in reestablishing himself, and I applaud it.

Now that Martel has joined Akeem and Big Bossman in Slick's stable right when the Twin Towers are threatening Demolition's WWF World tag team title, you can be positive that if a title change occurs that Martel will play a very significant role in it. After all, can anyone think of two people that Martel hates more than Ax and Smash?

Bravo to Rick Martel!

JOHN GREELEY
Halifax, Nova Scotia

ELLERING'S GENIUS

Is there any doubt now that Paul Ellering is the greatest tactical genius in the sport today? When I read "The Legion of Doom's Japanese Odyssey: Why Paul Ellering Split Up The Road Warriors" in the July '89 issue, it finally dawned on me why Hawk and Animal have been the best tag team in the sport for so long. Ellering never lets them get stale!

Only Paul would even *think* of splitting the Warriors so they remain fresh as a unit. He also realized that Hawk and Animal are still the most feared team in the Orient, so by making them wrestle with other partners, there'd be no way the Warriors could be banned from Japan.

Even though the Warriors have lost the NWA World tag team title, they did so was only because of a bogus count by ex-referee Teddy Long that led to the disputed decision. With the brilliance of Ellering to guide them, I'm sure the Warriors will be champions again very soon. If not, they can just go back to Japan and dominate there, like they always have and always will.

HERVE VELANS
San Juan, Puerto Rico

HATED HAYES

I can't believe that a respected magazine like yours would devote three pages to the demented ramblings of Michael Hayes ("Q & A," July 1989). I read very intently what he said, and just about every comment he uttered was a complete lie—especially the part where he feigned ignorance when asked if he would ever reunite with the Freebirds. Gee, what's he doing now?

Michael Hayes may have won the U.S. championship, but, in reader Ed Menning's opinion, Hayes only did so because of Terry Gordy's interference.

For months, Hayes acted like he loved the fans. What a low-rent loser! Now he's succeeded in stealing the U.S. title from Lex Luger, but it was only because of outside interference from Terry Gordy. If you ask me, Hayes should have been stripped of the title immediately. He proved that he could never defeat Luger in a one-on-one match.

I hope that Luger manages to get his hands on those cowards again soon, because if he does there won't be anything left of those Freebirds but a pile of feathers. It's high time that somebody got rid of Hayes and Gordy once and for all.

ED MENNING
Atlanta☐

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WIN, LOSE, OR DRAW

(Continued from page 10)

Although Vince McMahon once called Jimmy Snuka "a basket case," the Fijian is back in the WWF. He is feuding with The Honky Tonk Man.

last month. "You shouldn't be embarrassed. It was a boon to my reputation."

At the time, of course, I was glad to bolster Long's reputation.

That time is past.

* * *

Jimmy Snuka's return to the WWF was a surprise, considering that in an interview published in the Winter 1986 edition of *Wrestling 86,* Vince McMahon called Snuka "a basket case."

Snuka responded to the insult at the time by saying: "If I'm a basket case, then he's not big enough to fit in my basket . . . I'm surprised that a supposedly intelligent man would say something like that . . . "

But remember, wrestling promoters have this knack for reinventing history every six months, so Snuka's return should almost have been expected. Still, one wonders why Snuka would he return to the WWF and work for a man who insulted him so pointedly?

A hint: It's green, and it has pictures of Presidents.

Snuka's main opponent, by the way, has thus far been The Honky Tonk Man, former Intercontinental champion and current bad musician. Too bad the feud isn't for the I-C title. Snuka wrestled Don Muraco for that belt many times in 1982 but never did capture the gold. Against Honky, Snuka would win the belt on his first shot. "Superfly" is getting old, but he's still a tremendous athlete. His superfly leap has been copied by dozens of wrestlers, but none execute it with quite his style and grace.

But more enjoyable than watching Snuka wrestle is listening to his interviews. Sometimes it's hard to understand what he's saying, but it's the *way* he says it that's so intriguing, like the fate of the world is hanging on every sentence. It is a voice rich with the wisdom of the islands.

In a sport of uncommon individuals, Jimmy Snuka is unique. ☐

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from page 8)

Frank Dusek is taken to the hospital after being viciously attacked by Gen. Skandor Akbar's Devastation Inc. Dusek suffered neck and back injuries in the assault.

45" suplex has injured so many opponents ... Stampede North American champion **Larry Cameron** has teamed with **Angel of Death** to go after International tag champs **Chris Benoit** and **Beef Wellington**.

World Class official **Frank Dusek** was hospitalized with serious neck and back injuries after an attack by **Gen. Skandor Akbar**, **Harold T. Harris**, **Zodiac**, **Iceman Parsons**, **Brickhouse Brown**, and **Cactus Jack**. It all started when Zodiac won the World Class Texas title from **Eric Embry** in a controversial match refereed by Harris. Afterward, Dusek fired Harris for his biased officiating.

A little later in the evening, Akbar introduced Devastation Inc.'s new "sergeant at arms," Harold T. Harris. When an irate Dusek came out and ordered Harris out of the World Class area, Devastation Inc. unleashed a vicious attack. They beat Dusek with a chair and pounded him with their fists before Embry, **Percy Pringle**, **Steve Simpson**, and **Jeff Jarrett** came to his aid. By the way, the Texas title was held up, and one week later Embry beat Zodiac in a hair vs. mask match. Zodiac was revealed to be **Gary Young**, who had already been suspended. But Akbar's lawyers pressured WCCW officials into reinstating Young.

Big Steel Man has been stripped of the PWF title because of manager **Sir Oliver Humperdink's** interference in several matches. The title will be put up for grabs in a double-elimination tournament ... Former AWA World tag champs **Pat Tanaka** and **Paul Diamond** have apparently settled their differences and are headed for the Stampede area ... **Jimmy Golden** and **The Mongolian Stomper** defeated **Mike Davis** and **Masa Chono** for the CWF tag belts ... **Greg Wojokowski** has signed for a boxer vs. wrestler match against former heavyweight champ **Leon Spinks** ... **Rick Morton** is teaming with his cousin **Todd Morton** as the new **Rock 'n'**

Rick Morton is teaming with his cousin Todd Morton as the new Rock 'n' Roll Express.

Roll Express. Morton and **Robert Gibson** still team occasionally.

Bad news for AWA World tag team champions **Ken Patera** and **Brad Rheingans**. Rheingans suffered a dislocated right knee as the result of an attack by **Wayne Bloom** and **Mike Enos** in early May and is scheduled to undergo reconstructive surgery soon. Patera had faced off against Bloom in a car-lifting competition, but was attacked by Bloom and Enos during a lift. Rheingans got involved and was slammed hard by Enos, which resulted in the injury. Rheingans is out and Patera is defending the title with **Scott Norton**.

Longtime enemies **Jerry Lawler** and **Austin Idol** have formed an unlikely tag team called **The Wreckers** in the CWA, but it appears as if the honeymoon might be over. That's no surprise. CWA manager **Ronald Gossett** offered Idol a large sum of money to join his stable and wrestle Lawler. But Lawler offered Idol more money and promised to eventually give him a shot at his World Class belt—if Idol remained loyal. Now, however, it looks like Lawler is the disloyal one. "The King" has insinuated to Idol that since they're such good friends, he doesn't *need* a title shot. You know Idol doesn't agree!

That's what's happening. See you at the matches. ☐

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(Continued from page 20)

Donohue, pummeling Mike Lafferty, almost had to forego a career in sports because of a bad knee, but a strict rehabilitation program got him back in shape.

matches.

"People always said I should be a wrestler," said the surly Donohue, who plays defensive line for the CFL's Toronto Argonauts. "After a while, it started to make sense to me. So I finally went for it, and I haven't regretted it for a minute. Why not get paid to beat people up, which is something I do really well already?"

Donohue attended the University of Texas in 1981 and was a track and field standout, particularly in the shot put, where he had set several records while competing in high school in Massachusetts. He left Texas a year later because he had an opportunity to live out a longstanding dream.

"Back in 1982, I realized I had an excellent opportunity to make the U.S. Olympic team for the shot put," he said. "So I transferred to Iona College in New York State, where I trained with Tony Lothario, the Olympic throwing coach."

Donohue spent three years at Iona, barely missing his qualifying throw at the Olympic trials. His size and athletic ability, however, were more than enough to impress pro football scouts. In 1986, he signed a free-agent contract with the New York Jets, but just missed making the squad. The next year, it looked as if he had made the cut with the Green Bay Packers, but tragedy struck.

"I blew out my left knee," said Donohue. "For the next two years, nobody would take a look at me because they were afraid my knee wouldn't hold up to the stress. Thank God for Joey, man."

Joey is Joey Barnard, a six-time world karate champion. Barnard put Donohue through a strenuous rehabilitation program, redeveloping the knee to the point where he was signed by the Argonauts several months ago. It was during his work with Barnard that he met former wrestler Mark Tendler, who operates a wrestling training school on Long Island.

"Mark knew I could be a great pro wrestler right away," said Donohue. "He was right, too. I haven't been beaten yet, have I?"

Donohue seems to prefer old-fashioned brawling to using the technicial holds he learned through Tendler. During his early matches, his favorite maneuver was a three-point stance into a shoulder tackle, which he used in April to subdue Russian Scorpion II during his first pro bout at a New York arena.

Already, people have started to compared Donohue to Wahoo McDaniel, Ernie Ladd, and Lex Luger, who also used their football careers as a springboard into wrestling. When asked if any of those men were among his heroes, Donohue grimaced.

"I don't emulate *anyone*," he growled. "Those guys don't look up to *me,* do they? As far as I'm concerned, they're yesterday's news. Brian Donohue will be the *next* football star to become a superstar in the squared circle. Everybody else is history." □

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February 1980/Rhodes-Funk, Race, Spoiler, Brisco.
May 1980/Koloff-Anderson, Brody-Spoiler, Graham, Andre.
October 1980/Hogan, Flair, Wrestling II, Super D.
January 1981/Morales-Fuji, Zbyszko, Thornton, Keirn.
June 1981/Morales-Khan, Lawler, Slater, Piper.
September 1981/Backlund-Mosca, Freebirds, Flair, Rich, Junkyard Dog.
November 1981/Rhodes-DiBiase, Steamboat, Mulligan, McDaniel, Spoiler.
December 1981/Muraco-Morales, Patera, Steele, Andre.
March 1982/Valentine, Brisco-Funk, Steele, Flair, Hayes.
April 1982/Spoiler, Idol-Hayes, Morales, Super D, Ladd.
May 1982/Rich-Flair, Backlund, Superstar, Dillon, Wrestling II.
June 1982/Tommy Rich, Jimmy Snuka, Wrestlers rate each other.
July 1982/Steamboat-Idol, Albano, Rhodes, Patera.
August 1982/Piper-Rich, Flair-Slater, Rhodes, Valentine, Bockwinkel.
October 1982/Funk-Abdullah, Orton, Kabuki, Von Erich.
November 1982/Piper, Abdullah, Saito, Von Erich, Mascaras.
December 1982/Backlund-Rose, Rhodes-Flair, Albano, Humperdink.
January 1983/Rich, McDaniel-Valentine, Patera, Brisco, Bockwinkel.
February 1983/Flair-Race, Morales-Rose, Patera, Bravo, Spoiler.
March 1983/Flair-Bass, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat, Patera.
April 1983/Backlund-Graham, Briscos, Rhodes, Hogan, Samoans.
May 1983/Muraco, Dillon, Sullivan, Reed, Brisco, Von Erich.
June 1983/Piper, Bockwinkel-Patterson, Brody, Sullivan, Baba.
July 1983/Valiant-Humperdink, Martel, Hernandez, Murdoch, Armstrong.
October 1983/Martel-Valentine, Mulligan, Lawler, Von Erichs, Bruno.
November 1983/Andre-Mulligan, Kamala-Brody, Slater, Backlund.
December 1983/Windham-LeDuc, Santana, Sullivan, Garvin.
January 1984/Andre-Abdullah, Bockwinkel, Gilbert, Windham, Flair, Mosca.
February 1984/Rich-Sawyer, Idol-Hansen, Martel, Parsons, Von Erich.
March 1984/Starrcade '83, Closeups on Atlanta and Dallas cards.
April 1984/Von Erich-Gordy, Dillon & Nagasaki, Graham, DiBiase, Orndorff.
May 1984/LeDuc-Sawyer, Assassins, The Men Who Make Wrestling Fly!
June 1984/Windham-Flair, Gilbert, Sawyer, Bockwinkel, Tsuruta.
July 1984/Flair-Gordy, Duggan, Blanchard, Brisco, AWA tag tourny.
August 1984/Rich & Gilbert, Adams-Hayes, Von Erich, Faces Of Wrestling.
September 1984/Flair-Steamboat, Freebirds-Von Erichs—Special coverage of two big cards.
October 1984/Sullivan-Rhodes, Freebirds video, Atlas, Orange Bowl card.
November 1984/Von Erich & Billy Jack, Andre, Fab Ones, Summer Wars!
December 1984/Rich-Gilbert, Martel, Mascaras, Youngblood, World Class.
January 1985/Flair-McDaniel, Missing Link, Backlund, Fabulous Ones, *Pro Wrestling USA*, Valentine.
February 1985/Sullivan-Graham, Hernandez & Nicola Roberts, Bruno Jr., Steamboat, Warriors.
March 1985/Starrcade '84 featuring Flair, Rhodes, Steamboat, Koloffs, 1985 Datebook, Hayes, wrestling school.
April 1985/Von Erich-Blackwell, Haynes-Barr, Hart, Irwins, 1984 in Pictures, Blair.
May 1985/Albano, Freebirds-Flair, Steamboat, Hernandez, Las Vegas.
June 1985/Pro Wrestling U.S.A, Von Erich, Richter, Windham, Taylor.
July 1985/Von Erich, WrestleMania, bloodiest matches, Backlund, Snuka.
August 1985/Flair-Nikita, Orndorff, Slaughter, Parade of Champions II.
September 1985/Adams-Von Erich, Orndorff, Sawyer, Kamala, Barr.
October 1985/Martel-Hayes, Richter, Savage, Adams, T.A., Warriors.
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December 1985/Hogan, Zbyszko-Martel, Murdoch, Dillon, fiendish faces.
January 1986/Savage-Santana, Abdullah, Humongous, Von Raschke, Comiskey Park, Taylor.
February 1986/Junkyard Dog, Rude, Patrick, Garvin, Reed, Datebook.
March 1986/Starrcade '85, Ventura, Windham, Sunshine, Slaughter.
April 1986/Savage-Hogan, Martel-Hansen, 1985 in Pictures, Warriors, DiBiase.
May 1986/Sammartino, R&R Express, Sunshine-Hyatt, Slater, Devastating Holds, Hall & Hennig.
June 1986/Hogan-Muraco, Midnight Express, Freebirds, Battle of Belts II.
July 1986/Orndorff-Piper, Blanchard-T.A., Matches of '80s, Sheepherders, Bockwinkel, Bulldogs.
August 1986/Crockett Cup Tourny, Jake Roberts, Midnight Rockers, Von Erichs, Wrestling II.
September 1986/Bulldogs, Blanchard-Gibson, Lugar, Dundee, UWF tourny.
October 1986/Orndorff, Rude-Brody, Bash, Bockwinkel, Gordy, Adams.
November 1986/Andersons-R&R Express, Machine, Gordy, Managers.
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January 1987/Russians, Hyatt-Dark Journey, WWF Top 50, Fab Ones.
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March 1987/Kamala-Hogan, Starrcade 86, Atlas, Williams, Tatum.
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May 1987/Nikita-Flair, Bulldogs, Albano's career, Snuka-DeBeers, Taylor.
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September 1987/Hogan, Akbar, Luger-Nikita, Summer Feuds, charity shows.
October 1987/Windham, Bigelow, Bockwinkel, Western States tourny.
November 1987/Bash, Honky Tonk, Hart, Sheepherders, Condrey.
December 1987/Grappling Ghouls, Hogan-Andre, Luger-Nikita, Boesch card
January 1988/Honky Tonk, Garvin, T.A. career, Arcidi, Hogan.
February 1988/Rhodes, Strike Force, Rich-Adonis, Hyatt, 1988 datebook.
March 1988/Starrcade, Survivor Series, Simpson, Hennig, Zbyszko.
April 1988/1987 In Pictures, Tully & Arn, DiBiase, Kerry, Orton.
May 1988/Hawk-Flair, Andre-Hogan, Dangerously, Duggan, Mike George.
June 1988/Luger-Tully, DiBiase, Adams, NWA New York invasion.
July 1988/Savage wins WWF tourney, Rockers-Express, Hayes, Dusty-Rider.
August 1988/Luger and Sting win Crockett Cup, Savage-DiBiase, Nasty Boys, Ultimate Warrior.
September 1988/Predictions Through 1998, Williams, Rhodes, Bad Company, greatest Garden matches.
October 1988/Midnight Rockers, Sting, Taylor, Koloff, Hot Young Lions.
November 1988/R&R Express, Honky Tonk, Von Erichs, Great American Bash
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January 1989/Jake-Cheryl-Rude, Sting, Lawler, Flair, Savage's career.
February 1989/The Champions in '89, Duggan, Roberts, 1989 datebook
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July 1989/WrestleMania V, Sting, Steamboat, Martel vs. Rude, Embry.

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(Continued from page 16)

biting and slugging Reed, but Reed took the advantage when his manager, Hiro Matsuda, tripped Steiner as he bounded off the ropes. Reed then overwhelmed Steiner and nearly got the three-count.

After referee Tommy Young was knocked out in a collision, Matsuda again interfered. As Steiner tried to strangle Matsuda, Reed climbed the ropes, but Eddie Gilbert ran in and pushed Reed off. With Reed flat on the mat, Steiner pinned him.

In other bouts: Lex Luger & Rick Steamboat beat Ric Flair & Michael Hayes ... Sting pinned Dan Spivey ... The Road Warriors defeated The Varsity Club ... The Great Muta beat Bob Emory ... Bob Orton defeated Mike Justice ... Shane Douglas pinned George South.

Butch Reed calls for Rick Steiner to get back in the ring after Steiner had pinned him in a bout in Milwaukee. The interference of Reed's manager, Hiro Matsuda, was not enough to bring him victory.

Hamilton, Ontario *(Correspondent—Dan Orgill):* The main event was a rematch between Intercontinental champion "Ravishing" Rick Rude and former champ, The Ultimate Warrior.

Warrior began dominating moments after the opening bell, using a series of clotheslines and kidney shots to stagger the I-C champ. Rude was nearly pinned following two reverse atomic drops and a massive bodyslam.

The Warrior continued to devastate Rude with a vicious assault as Bobby Heenan looked on in disbelief and the crowd at Copps Coliseum roared its approval. But Rude gained the advantage with an eyerake and got a near-fall after a clothesline and a piledriver. Rude continued to rock the challenger with closed-fist punches.

Rude tried to wear down the Warrior with a reverse chinlock, but Warrior powered out and regained the advantage. Rude aborted Warrior's big splash by lifting his knees, but the Warrior came back and set up the champion for a big splash. But before he could execute the maneuver, Rude rolled out of the ring.

Warrior followed Rude out and they started brawling. When Heenan attempted to interfere, Warrior chased him into the ring, unwittingly beating the 10-count and winning by countout.

In other bouts: The Honky Tonk Man beat Jim Powers ... The Blue Blazer pinned Steve Lombardi ... Greg Valentine pinned Hillbilly Jim ... Akeem & Big Bossman and Demolition battled to a double-DQ ... Terry Taylor defeated Richard Charland ... Rick Martel pinned Bret Hart ... Curt Hennig pinned Tito Santana.

Tampa, FL *(Correspondent—Jack Perkins):* Dustin Rhodes received a shot against Al Perez for the PWF Florida title. After several minutes of hard-fought action during which both men had a brief advantage, Dustin attempted a suplex on Perez. Perez' manager, Sir Oliver Humperdink, reached up and tripped Dustin, allowing Perez to fall on top of him.

Steve Keirn, who had been doing commentary from ringside, ran over to the ring and stopped the referee from making the count. When Perez stood up and tried to grab Keirn, Dustin snuck up on him and rolled him up for the pin and the championship.

In other bouts: Mike Graham defeated The Gladiator ... Steve Keirn beat Comrade Busich ... Big Steel Man won a handicap match over Rick Diamond & Brady Higgins ... Jomo Kenya defeated Mike Awesome ... The Nasty Boys beat The New Southern Force—Tony Anthony and Black Bart—by DQ. □

YOU ASKED US

(Continued from page 18)

Q: "This is for Dustin Rhodes: There's no question that your father, Dusty, is one of the true legends in this sport. Do you think you'll ever be as big a legend as he is?"—Eric Thornton, Canyonville, OR

A: "Those are pretty big shoes to fill," responded Dustin. "My father is a three-time NWA World champion, and he's been dominant in the WWF and AWA, too. Every move he's ever made has produced more success than any other wrestler I can think of. My father was also very instrumental in helping me get started with my career, and you must remember that I'm still a rookie in this sport. I've got a lot of learning to do. Even mentioning my name in the same context with my dad's is being a little unrealistic, I think. After all, it would take me at least a decade to even begin to approach all the titles he's won, and I haven't even earned my first one yet. Can I top my dad? Not in a million years. To me, becoming a successful wrestler on my *own* terms is a lot more important."

***

Q: "My question is for Tom Zenk: How do you feel about your former tag team partner in the WWF, Rick Martel, turning against Tito Santana and hiring Slick as his manager?"—Adam Balaban, Douglaston, NY

A: "I saw this coming a long time ago, but I never dreamed that Rick could ever stoop quite this low," said Zenk. "When I was tagging with him, Martel's intensity could be frightening, like he was brooding deep inside or something. Tito Santana is a very classy individual, and it's a shame that Martel would use him as an excuse for his callous actions. All of that was awful, but nothing can compare with Rick hiring a no-good charlatan like Slick to be his manager. I mean, Martel is a former AWA World champion. What can Slick do for him that he couldn't have achieved on his own? With a devious man like that calling the shots, a superior athlete like Rick is capable of just about anything. I'd hate to think what those two have in store for the WWF."

Rick Martel and Tom Zenk were once close partners, but now they're wrestling in different areas and on different sides of the rulebook.

***

Q: "This is for Al Perez: Would you ever re-form your tag team with Wendell Cooley? You two were Mid-South tag team champions, and I think you could dominate the sport if you got back together."—R.B. Smith Jr., Bellews Creek, NC

A: "Mr. Smith doesn't pay attention very well, does he?" responded Perez. "If he did, he would realize that I am the Florida champion in the PWF. How did I ever reach such success? I did it by casting aside all the goody-goody crap that Cooley used to lay on me all the time. Since become a rulebreaker, I became the World Class Texas champion, the World Class champion, and the Florida champion. How? By busting heads and asking questions later. I don't think I could ever team with a wimp like Cooley again. Well, I might *attack* him, maybe, but I'll never team with him unless he changes his ways and becomes a whole lot tougher." □

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DEMOLITION

(Continued from page 31)

But to do that, they must be judged against history.

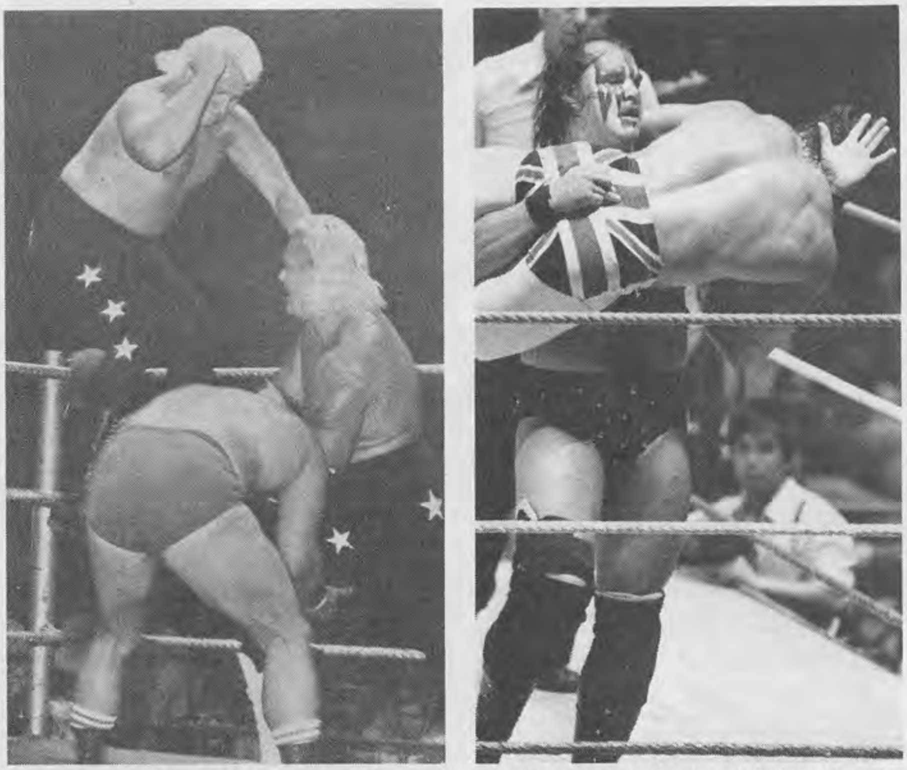
And the WWF refuses to acknowledge history.

"That's the way it's always been," said Capt. Lou Albano, who managed the Valiant brothers to their record-setting title reign. "The WWF refuses to acknowledge that wrestling existed before 1983. It makes no sense, it's positively ridiculous, and it's hurting the sport we all know and love. More than that, it hurts Demolition, and they deserve some recognition."

More than anyone, Albano knows what it takes to have a successful tag team. During his incredible career, which spanned several decades—as well as several philosophies—and ended with his retirement in 1987, he managed 12 different teams to 16 WWF World tag team championships. The Captain is, undoubtedly, the greatest tag team manager ever.

"You bet your sweet booty, baby," Albano said. "I know how and why tag teams are great, and you'd better believe that these guys, Demolition, are tremendous. At first, I had my doubts, I thought maybe they were all style and no substance, but they've beaten every team that's stood in front of them, they've proven they know how to wrestle, and they've held the belts the longest. Better than 'Handsome' Jimmy and 'Luscious' Johnny? Maybe so."

This is incredible praise for a team that was once labeled "Road Warrior clones." They were thought to be a product of the WWF's imagination: Find two sizable wrestlers, dress them up in leather and spikes, and let them act like the Warriors. Demolition, however, has been so successful, the criticism is no longer valid.



Johnny and Jimmy Valiant (above left, against Tony Garea) held the record before Demolition surpassed them. Smash holds Dynamite Kid while making the tag (above right). Ax catches Shawn Michaels (below left) and fights Barbarian's bearhug (below right).

Demolition has been ranked no lower than second in the tag team ratings since the December 1988 issue of *The Wrestler*. Last month, they climbed to the top spot for the first time, and they remain there this month.

Ax and Smash are their own men. They have gone about things their own way and have proven to be far better wrestlers than anybody thought.

"They gave us a real hard

time," said Davey Boy Smith, one-half of the now-defunct British Bulldogs. "Me and Dynamite figured we were too versatile for them, we figured we could just wear them down and then strike with an aerial attack, but they pace themselves well and know when to attack. Of course, at the time we wrestled them, they had Fuji, so that was an added advantage.

"I'd stop short, though, of calling them the best WWF team ever," Davey Boy continued. "When Dynamite was at his peak, we were a pretty damn good team. I don't think they could've beaten us then. Strike Force was pretty solid, too, and you aren't going to find many teams who can do the things The Hart Foundation does. I really can't speak about the Valiants, because I never saw them wrestle."

Neither have most current WWF fans, who have most likely never even heard of such teams as Prof. Tanaka and Mr. Fuji, Tony Garea and Dean Ho, The Valiant Brothers, Victor Rivera and Domenic DeNucci, The Executioners, and so many others.

For this reason, it is difficult to place Demolition's feat in historical perspective. History hasn't been made in the WWF's eyes because the WWF has in effect erased history, refusing to acknowledge that it is such an important aspect of the sport. Imagine what it would have been like when Henry Aaron hit his 715th home run if nobody knew that Babe Ruth once hit 714!

Nonetheless, Demolition *did* make history on April 2, and with each day they hold the title, the record grows longer. The WWF ignores history, but history continues to be made.

A tree that falls in a forest *does* make noise. And Demolition *is* the longest-reigning WWF tag team of all time. Spread the word; nobody else will. □

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PIPER IS BACK

(Continued from page 33)

vember, many in the wrestling world thought Piper was long gone.

"Aww, you didn't think I'd leave wrestling *forever,* did ya?" asked Piper in his usual sarcastic style after he engaged in a "workout" match with Nord the Barbarian on May 6 at the Portland Sports Arena. "Anytime I see jerks like Nord and The Grappler start to ruin the territory in my hometown, then it's time to get of my duff and do something about it. I guess I'm just addicted to wrestling, 'cause I can't keep away for long."

After watching PNW wrestling on television at his Portland home—and seeing the rulebreakers there beginning to get away with major rule infractions—Piper began to make sporadic guest appearances in the Pacific Northwest area during the early part of the year. Since then, he's succeeded in making life miserable for rulebreakers like Nord, The Grappler, and Buddy Rose during interviews. Although he hadn't made an in-ring appearance, his presence whetted the fans' appetites—they wanted as much Piper as they could get.

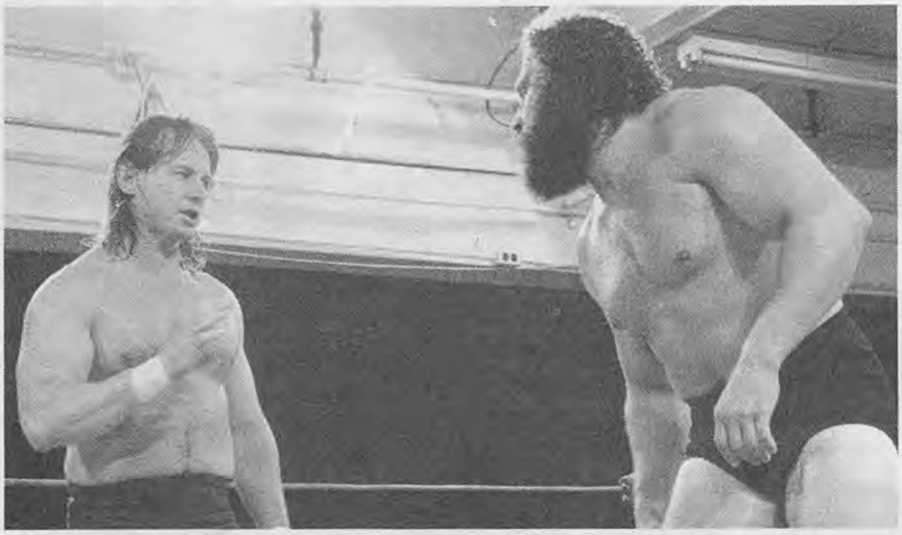
"Those two creeps [Nord and Grappler] think they're hot stuff, but combined they don't have enough talent to make *one* decent wrestler," said Piper. "Plus, I've heard this Grappler guy is the ugliest goon anybody's ever seen. That's why I told the fans I'd give $500 to the first person who could provide me with a photo of that creep without his mask on. I figured that if everybody got a glimpse of his ugly mug, he'd take off for 'parts unknown,' don't ya know."

When two local fans produced a picture of a maskless Grappler, the veteran rulebreaker was so frustrated that he and Nord tried to savage longtime PNW promoter Don Owen and local radio personality Bill Peacock on separate occasions. Fortunately, Piper was there to break up both these altercations.

But he was Incensed.

Don Owen was the man who gave

Fighting in the movie *They Live* (above) wasn't enough to satisfy Piper, so he got into the ring against Nord the Barbarian (below).



Nord covers Piper for the pin as The Grappler, who was acting as special referee, makes the count. Piper became incensed with Nord and Grappler after they roughed up Don Owen, the PNW promoter and Piper's longtime friend.

him his first big break in the United States and he looks upon him a father figure. He also happens to be in his 70s.

Piper immediately challenged Nord to the "workout" bout. Although it was not a sanctioned match, the event still brought a sold-out crowd to the arena. They would not go home disappointed.

Unfortunately for Piper, Nord would not engage in the match unless Grappler was allowed to referee. True to form, the masked man continuously interfered every time Piper locked the 6'6" Nord in a hold. After several minutes of such tactics, Piper could take no more. He reached down to ringside and threw a pitcher of water into Nord's face. After that, the workout disintegrated into a slugfest, which Piper clearly won, sending Nord fleeing to the dressing room.

Piper was so ecstatic with his performance that he spent 30 minutes signing autographs for a large throng of fans afterward. He also hinted that it may not have been the last the fans would see of him.

"Haven't lost it, have I?" laughed Piper. "Even after more than two years off, I haven't lost any of my vigor or strength, and that big slob ran off like the fool that he is. That felt good. *Really* good."

Apparently, it felt good enough to lure Piper back into the ring for the three sanctioned WWF bouts against DiBiase.

"We want Piper back *all* the time," said the young WWF fan as he made his way out of the Los Angeles arena. "There's something about the guy that breeds excitement wherever he goes. Wrestling's not the same without him around. I hope he forgets the movies and comes back to where he *really* belongs."

Is this the beginning of one of the biggest stories of the year? Will Piper finally return to the sport he admits he loves more than anything else? So far, the "Rowdy Scot" has stopped just short of announcing his full-time return.

The last word on that—as usual—is Piper's. □

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FLAIR VS. FUNK

(Continued from page 35)

The NWA would, in effect, be saying: "Want a title shot? Don't work for it. *Cripple* for it."

And that can't be allowed to happen. Wrestling is governed by a sacred set of rules that must not be broken. A championship is the most valuable goal a wrestler can hope to attain. A title shot must be earned through diligence, hard work, and victories over the top wrestlers in the federation. It is not earned by attacking the champ and creating a feud.

Funk originally won the NWA World title on December 10, 1975, and held it for over a year before losing to Harley Race on February 6, 1977. Since then, the title has changed hands 21 times. *Twenty-one* times! The sport has

Funk assaults Flair outside the ring (top left) and prepares to piledrive him on the judges' table (above). Funk thinks his status as a former NWA World champion should be enough to get him a match with Flair.

and his game plan of horror never changed: slap an opponent in the face, force him to say he should be the number-one challenger to the World title, then injure him with multiple piledrivers on the cement floor.

Armstrong and the Rich brothers, who were in the NWA for round one of the World tag team tournament, couldn't compete because of the neck injuries they suffered. Even referee Tommy Young nearly became the victim of a Funk piledriver. Several lesser-known preliminary wrestlers vowed never to step into the ring with Funk again . . . until he gets what he wants.

"Give it to him!" one moaned in pain while stretched out on the trainer's table, blood pouring from above his eyes and his neck swollen beyond recognition. "Give the man anything he wants, anything to stop the terror! Anybody who steps into the ring with that madman is out of his mind!"

But we think just the opposite is true: Anybody who would grant Funk a match against Flair is out of his mind. Sudden, out-of-control, senseless violence would be condoned. Funk would be rewarded for nearly crippling Flair and injuring several innocent opponents, as well as nearly manhandling a referee.

Funk piledrives Flair on the table, causing the neck injury that has kept the "Nature Boy" sidelined for the past two months.

changed. The wrestlers have changed. Terry Funk has changed. Being a former champion is something to be proud of, but it does not automatically entitle one to a top ranking.

Try telling that to the man himself, however.

"People should have respect for the history of the sport and they should have respect for what I've done," Funk demanded. "I was a World champion before Flair ever won his first title, and he knows that."

That's the point. Terry Funk is a part of past history. He is trying to make a comeback after a successful stint in Hollywood, but he was nowhere in sight in recent years during the glory days of Flair's title reigns. Past credentials don't measure up. If Funk can work his way through the top 10 and beat other top contenders, we say give him what he wants.

But Terry Funk's disgust and disregard for established procedures, which may earn him a title shot eventually, has only earned our disgust and disregard for him. ☐

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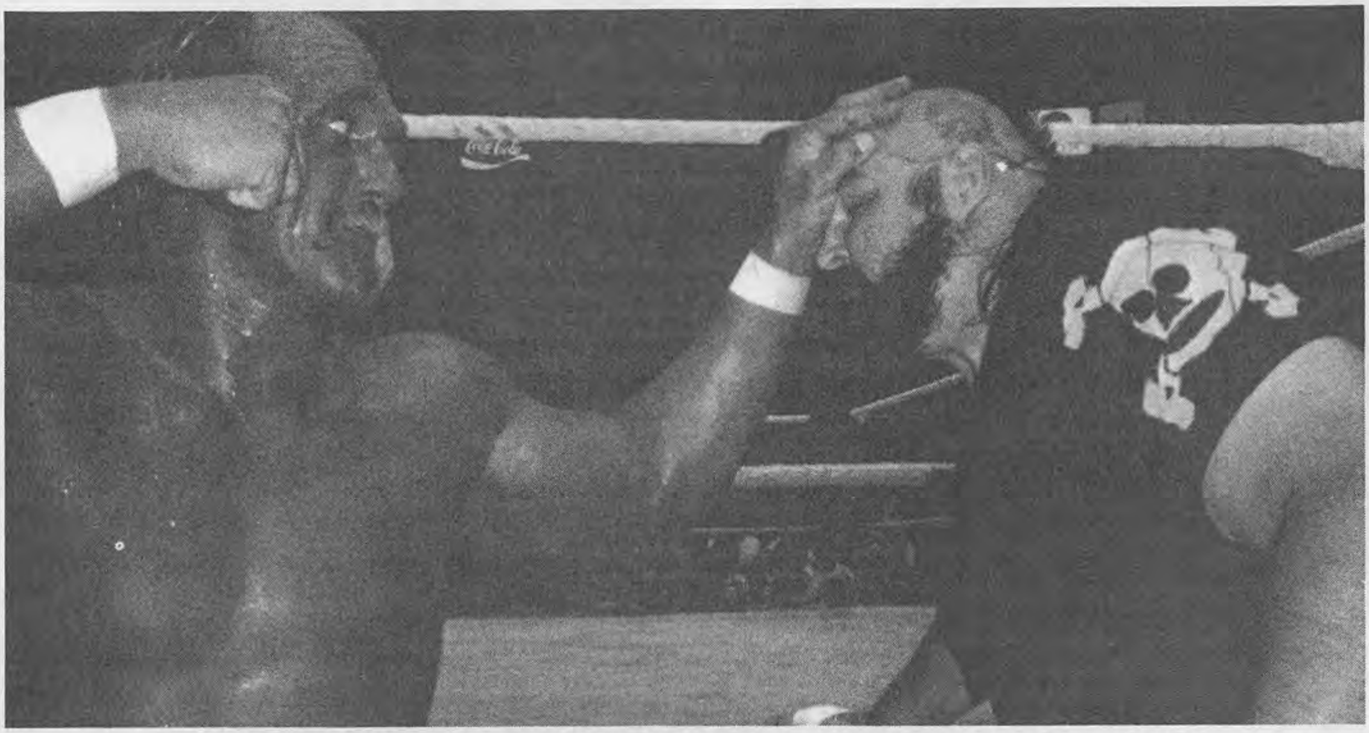
ZEUS/HOGAN

(Continued from page 37)



Some of Hogan's larger opponents have included One Man Gang (above) and Big Bossman (bottom). Although Zeus has no prior pro wrestling experience, he wants to step in the ring with the "Hulkster." In *No Holds Barred,* Hogan's character Rip defeated Zeus.

between fantasy and reality, and he's getting a title match."

It certainly won't take Zeus long to learn what the sport of wrestling is all about once he steps into the ring with the "Hulkster." In real life, the pain is real, too. And if trained *wrestlers* can't do away with Hogan, why should a non-wrestler be any different? In fact, a Zeus-Hogan bout could be one of the biggest mismatches of the decade. Zeus may believe he'll prove otherwise, but he's just begging for his own destruction!

Though a novice as a grappler, there is no doubt that Zeus is an impressive physical specimen. At 6'10" and 343 pounds, he's bigger than Hogan, who stands 6'8" and weighs 302 pounds. Zeus is also an athlete, having played professional football with the USFL's New Orleans Breakers. He was a Division II national champion in the shot put in 1982 while attending college in Los Angeles. And, from even the slightest glance, it's clear that this is a man who is seriously into weightlifting and bodybuilding.

As notable as his other athletic accomplishments have been, however, Zeus has spent most of the past five years as an actor, not an athlete. He's performed in dozens of television programs, commercials, and films, but he's had no formal wrestling training.

The Wrestler has heard several reports that claim Zeus and Hogan did not get along on the set of the movie. Apparently, it's professional jealousy creeping up on Zeus. He's a bigger man, and he may even be a bit stronger than Hogan, but in the film he's given the beating of his life. But he ought to remember that he didn't *really* get beaten. Zeus seems incapable of separating the film from real life. It was just a role he played.

But that doesn't make Zeus feel any better. He's made several appearances with Brother Love, and during each one he continues to call for Hogan's scalp. Unfortunately, he is making the fatal mistake of disregarding Hogan's ring accomplishments.

Hogan has been unbeatable since winning the WWF title from Randy Savage at WrestleMania V

on April 2. He's defeated Big Bossman in several steel cage matches, and has trounced Bad News Brown just as often. Most importantly, he's managed to withstand several rematches with Savage, who has since hired Sherri Martel as his new manager.

It doesn't seem to matter to Hogan whom he faces. As one of the sport's dominant forces for the better part of a decade, why should he even begin to fear the challenge of an *actor,* no matter how tough the actor thinks he is?

"Hogan was trained to be a wrestler, and he's spent years trying to perfect his craft," said two-time former WWF World champion Bruno Sammartino. "Zeus has spent the last several years trying to memorize scripts. While it's true that wrestling is a sport for big, strong men, it's also one that requires vast knowledge. Zeus just doesn't have that knowledge, especially when going against a man like Hogan."

"The whole thing is crazy," agreed former Intercontinental champion Don Muraco, who has faced Hogan in the past. "Zeus is gonna get squashed like a grape. Becoming a pro wrestler takes years of training. Look at my career, for example. I began in 1970, but it wasn't until five years later that I really started to take off. You mean to tell me that Zeus wants to walk right in and defeat the greatest champion of modern times? *Hah!* He's dreaming!"

It may seem strange, but that's *exactly* what Zeus wants to do. Any week now, the WWF is likely to announce that Zeus will get his shot at the champion, a man who had cleanly pinned the 497-pound Andre, the 468-pound Akeem, and the 446-pound Bundy—veteran wrestlers all.

It's likely to be Zeus' first—and last—shot at glory. Zeus hasn't got a prayer against Hulk Hogan. Real life is about to imitate art once again. And it's not going to be pretty. □

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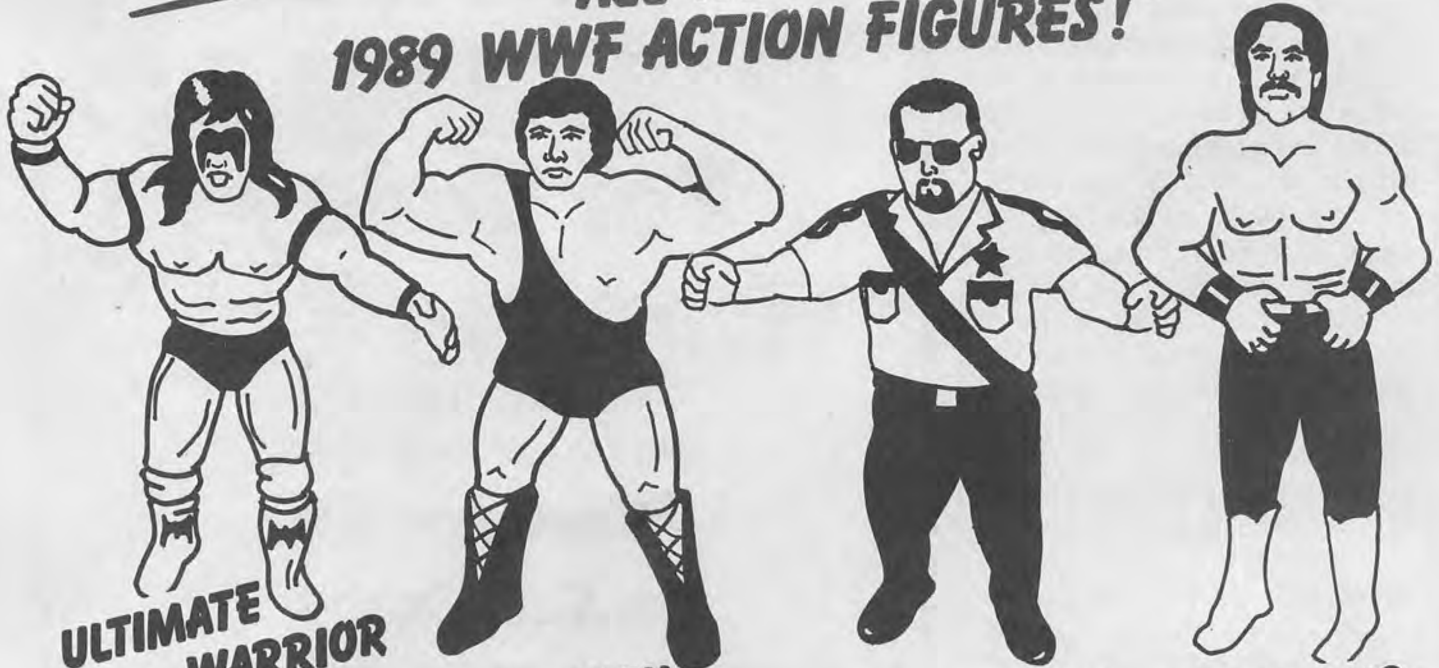

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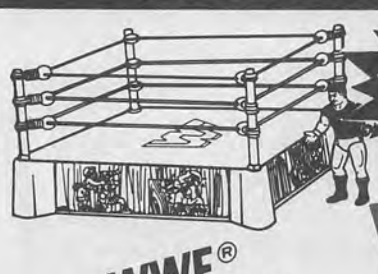

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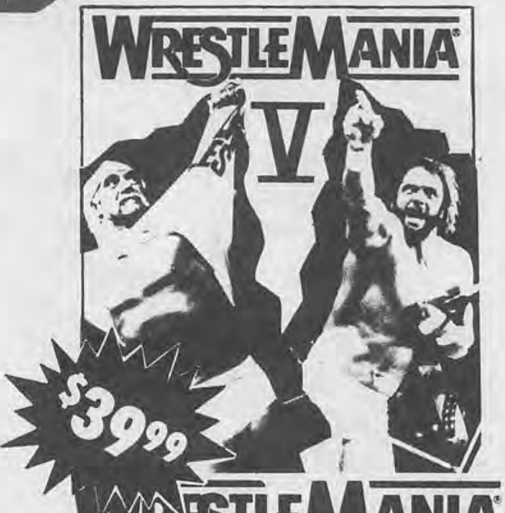

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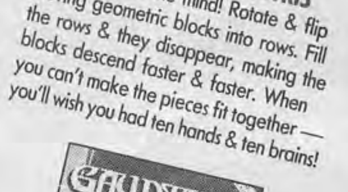

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THE Wrestler

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TOP 10

1 **HULK HOGAN**
302, Venice Beach, CA
WWF World champion

2 **RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI
No. 2 contender: NWA title

3 **LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
U.S. heavyweight champion

4 **RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
No. 2 contender: WWF title

5 **STING**
260, Venice Beach, CA
NWA TV champion

6 **RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN
WWF Intercontinental champion

7 **LARRY ZBYSZKO**
248, Pittsburgh, PA
AWA World champion

8 **JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
World Class champion

9 **JEFF JARRETT**
200, Hendersonville, TN
CWA champion

10 **LARRY CAMERON**
280, Chicago, IL
Stampede North American champion

TAG TEAMS

1 **DEMOLITION**
Combined weight: 585 pounds
WWF World tag team champions

2 **THE ROAD WARRIORS**
Combined weight: 567 pounds
see "Ratings Analysis"

3 **AKEEM & BIG BOSSMAN**
Combined weight: 816 pounds
No. 1 contenders: WWF tag team title

4 **THE SAMOAN SWAT TEAM**
Combined weight: 510 pounds
No. 1 contenders: NWA tag team title

5 **MICHAEL HAYES & TERRY GORDY**
Combined weight: 544 pounds
No. 2 contenders: NWA tag team title

6 **THE BUSHWHACKERS**
Combined weight: 542 pounds
No. 2 contenders: WWF tag team title

7 **TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON**
Combined weight: 484 pounds
No. 3 contenders: WWF tag team title

8 **SHAUN & STEVE SIMPSON**
Combined weight: 430 pounds
World Class Texas tag team champions

9 **RICK STEINER & EDDIE GILBERT**
Combined weight: 470 pounds
U.S. tag team champions

10 **DUSTIN RHODES & MIKE GRAHAM**
Combined weight: 486 pounds
PWF tag team champions

NWA

World Champion:
RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN

1—**LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
2—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI
3—**STING**
260, Venice Beach, CA
4—**TERRY FUNK**
247, Amarillo, TX
5—**MICHAEL HAYES**
255, Marietta, GA
6—**THE GREAT MUTA**
245, Tokyo, Japan
7—**STEVE WILLIAMS**
265, Norman, OK
8—**MIKE ROTUNDO**
245, Syracuse, NY
9—**SCOTT HALL**
290, Minneapolis, MN
10—**BRIAN PILLMAN**
226, Cincinnati, OH

WWF

World Champion:
HULK HOGAN
302, Venice Beach, CA

1—**RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN
2—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
3—**BRUTUS BEEFCAKE**
273, San Francisco, CA
4—**THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR**
280, Queens, NY
5—**HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, Glens Falls, NY
6—**DINO BRAVO**
256, Montreal, Quebec
7—**CURT HENNIG**
235, Minneapolis, MN
8—**JOHN STUDD**
364, Los Angeles, CA
9—**JIMMY SNUKA**
250, Fiji Islands
10—**TED DiBIASE**
247, Omaha, NB

AWA

World Champion:
LARRY ZBYSZKO
248, Pittsburgh, PA

1—**GREG GAGNE**
220, Robbinsdale, MN
2—**TOM ZENK**
237, Minneapolis, MN
3—**AKIO SATO**
234, Tokyo, Japan
4—**KEN PATERA**
256, Portland, OR
5—**DERRICK DUKES**
235, Boston, MA
6—**COL. DeBEERS**
248, Cape Town, South Africa
7—**MIKE GRAHAM**
232, Tampa, FL
8—**SGT. SLAUGHTER**
310, Parris Island, SC
9—**STEVE KEIRN**
235, Tampa, FL
10—**TOMMY JAMMER**
265, St. Joseph, MO

WORLD CLASS

World Class Champion:
JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN

1—**ERIC EMBRY**
225, Lexington, KY
2—**AL PEREZ**
238, Tampa, FL
3—**KERRY VON ERICH**
260, Denton, TX
4—**MATT BORNE**
235, Portland, OR
5—**JEFF JARRETT**
200, Hendersonville, TN
6—**BRICKHOUSE BROWN**
225, Winter Haven, FL
7—**CACTUS JACK**
247, Truth or Consequences, NM
8—**JIMMY JACK FUNK**
243, Portland, OR
9—**ICEMAN PARSONS**
245, St. Louis, MO
10—**CHRIS ADAMS**
228, Stratford, England

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings.

MOST POPULAR

1 HULK HOGAN
302, Venice Beach, CA
Last month: No. 1 Most Popular

2 STING
260, Venice Beach, CA
Last month: No. 2 Most Popular

3 THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR
280, Queens, NY
Last month: No. 3 Most Popular

4 RICK STEAMBOAT
238, Honolulu, HI
Last month: No. 6 Most Popular

5 BRUTUS BEEFCAKE
273, San Francisco, CA
Last month: No. 5 Most Popular

6 HACKSAW DUGGAN
280, Glens Falls, NY
Last month: No. 8 Most Popular

7 DUSTY RHODES
302, Austin, TX
Last month: No. 10 Most Popular

8 LEX LUGER
268, Chicago, IL
Last month: No. 4 Most Popular

9 ERIC EMBRY
225, Lexington, KY
Last month: No. 9 Most Popular

10 RICK STEINER
248, Detroit, MI
Last month: No. 7 Most Popular

MOST HATED

1 RANDY SAVAGE
245, Sarasota, FL
Last month: No. 1 Most Hated

2 TERRY FUNK
247, Amarillo, TX
Last month: unrated

3 MICHAEL HAYES
255, Marietta, GA
Last month: No. 4 Most Hated

4 RICK RUDE
246, Robbinsdale, MN
Last month: No. 3 Most Hated

5 THE GREAT MUTA
245, Tokyo, Japan
Last month: unrated

6 RICK MARTEL
236, Quebec City, Quebec
Last month: No. 8 Most Hated

7 LARRY ZBYSZKO
248, Pittsburgh, PA
Last month: No. 7 Most Hated

8 TED DiBIASE
247, Omaha, NB
Last month: No. 10 Most Hated

9 DYNAMITE KID
228, Manchester, England
Last month: unrated

10 JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN
Last month: unrated

For period ended June 2, 1989

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of those issues—in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only—and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a number-one rating, nine for a number-two ranking, and so on down to one point for a number-10 rating. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, allowing a maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

1—RANDY SAVAGE ....92 points
2—RIC FLAIR ....76 points
3—LEX LUGER ....65 points
4—HULK HOGAN...55 points
4—JERRY LAWLER ....55 points

TAG TEAMS

1—THE ROAD WARRIORS..............................92 points
1—DEMOLITION...92 points
3—STAN LANE & BOBBY EATON..................55 points
4—PAT TANAKA & PAUL DIAMOND ....46 points
5—WARLORD & BARBARIAN ....45 points

STAMPEDE

North American Champion:
LARRY CAMERON
280, Chicago

1—**CHRIS BENOIT**
218, Edmonton, Alberta
2—**DAVEY BOY SMITH**
245, Leeds, England
3—**DYNAMITE KID**
228, Manchester, England
4—**JOHNNY SMITH**
235, Manchester, England
5—**RICKY RICE**
230, Edina, MN
6—**ANGEL OF DEATH**
310, Los Angeles, CA
7—**BRUCE HART**
211, Calgary, Alberta
8—**BEEF WELLINGTON**
225, Lloydmaster, Alberta
9—**KERRY BROWN**
295, Kansas City, MO
10—**DUKE MYERS**
320, Portland, OR

CWA

CWA Champion:
JEFF JARRETT
200, Hendersonville, TN

1—**JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
2—**DUTCH MANTEL**
224, Oil Trough, TX
3—**AUSTIN IDOL**
240, Las Vegas, NV
4—**ROBERT FULLER**
257, Dyresburg, TN
5—**THE MASTER OF PAIN**
320, parts unknown
6—**PERRY JACKSON**
280, Ft. Bragg, NC
7—**TONY ANTHONY**
235, Bucksnorth, TN
8—**BILLY TRAVIS**
218, Houston, TX
9—**PHIL HICKERSON**
208, Memphis, TN
10—**BRIAN LEE**
242, St. Petersburg, FL

ACW: **ACW champion**—Don Kernodle; **1**—Bobby Fulton; **2**—Nikita Koloff; **3**—Nelson Royal; **4**—Sam Houston; **5**—Colt Steel; **6**—Ivan Koloff; **7**—Ken Shamrock; **8**—Tommy Angel; **9**—Samoan Tai; **10**—Basher.

CWF: **Continental champion**—Wendell Cooley; **1**—Alan Martin; **2**—Dan Davis; **3**—Tom Prichard; **4**—Rick Morton; **5**—Bill Dundee; **6**—Mike Davis; **7**—Todd Morton; **8**—Jackie Fulton; **9**—Don Harris; **10**—Adrian Street.

ICW: **ICW champion**—Tony Atlas; **1**—Don Muraco; **2**—Ivan Putski; **3**—Joe Savoldi; **4**—Vic Steamboat; **5**—Ken Patera; **6**—Blackjack Mulligan; **7**—Col. DeBeers; **8**—Junkyard Dog; **9**—Mike Sharpe; **10**—Kendall Windham.

PNW: **PNW champion**—Carl Styles; **1**—The Grappler; **2**—Buddy Rose; **3**—Steve Doll; **4**—Scott Peterson; **5**—Art Barr; **6**—Nord the Barbarian; **7**—Col. DeBeers; **8**—The American Warrior; **9**—Rex King; **10**—Joey Jackson.

PWF: **PWF champion**—title vacant; **1**—Dustin Rhodes; **2**—Al Perez; **3**—Bam Bam Bigelow; **4**—Steve Keirn; **5**—Mike Graham; **6**—Tyree Pride; **7**—Jim Backlund; **8**—Lou Perez; **9**—Brett Sawyer; **10**—Kendall Windham.

WWC: **WWC champion**—Steve Strong; **1**—Invader I; **2**—Rip Rogers; **3**—Abdullah the Butcher; **4**—White Angel; **5**—TNT; **6**—Kareem Muhammad; **7**—Abughdadien; **8**—Hercules Ayala; **9**—White Angel; **10**—Miguel Perez Jr.

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating nearly 200 wrestlers in 18 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

NWA tag team turmoil! When NWA World tag team champions **Steve Williams** and **Mike Rotundo** faced **The Road Warriors** on May 7 in Nashville, they were disqualified and stripped of their belts for attacking referee **Nikita Koloff.** A tournament was ordered, and the first match was a shocker: The Warriors lost by countout to **Michael Hayes** and **Terry Gordy** and were eliminated from the tournament. So, the best team remaining in the tourney appears to be **The Samoan Swat Team,** followed closely by Hayes and Gordy, then **Stan Lane** and **Bobby Eaton.** But this fluke loss wasn't enough to make us drop the Warriors significantly in the tag team ratings. They're still one of the best teams in the world, victimized lately by some bad breaks, and merely drop one spot to number two. The SST, by the way, beat **Ron Simmons** and **Ranger Ross** in their first-round match. Also, Lane and Eaton—**The Midnight Express**—beat **The Masked Raider** and **Butch Reed.** Raider was a last-second substitution for **Bob Orton,** who was injured in a prematch altercation with **Dick Murdoch.**

The Road Warriors

Injury turmoil! After hours of debate, *The Wrestler* ratings committee decided to drop NWA World champion **Ric Flair** out of the Top 10 ratings because of the injuries he suffered at the hands of **Terry Funk** on May 7 in Nashville. Flair was scheduled to be sidelined for several months and, therefore, unable to defend his title. "If you can't defend, you can't be in the Top 10," Editor-in-Chief Stu Saks said. "However, Flair is still NWA World champion, so he remains on top of the NWA ratings."

There's a similar situation in the AWA. **Brad Rheingans,** one-half of the World tag team champions with **Ken Patera,** has also been sidelined for an indefinite period (see "What's Happening"). Patera has chosen **Scott Norton** as a substitute for title defenses, but the ratings committee decided that Norton and Patera are *not* actually the championship team. Therefore, the AWA World tag team champs are no longer in the tag team ratings.

Tracking Trends. No turmoil here. Just a brief look at the ratings before we move on to your letters.

TOP 10: **Rick Steamboat** lost the NWA World title, and **Hulk Hogan** moves back into the top spot. Steamboat drops a notch to number two ... **Lex Luger** lost and regained the U.S. title since the last issue, so he stays at three ... Flair's absence and **Dusty Rhodes'** loss of the PWF title have opened the door for several wrestlers to enter the Top 10: **Jerry Lawler** moves in at eight, **Jeff Jarrett** at nine, and **Larry Cameron** is a first-timer at 10.

TAG TEAMS: **Akeem** and **Big Bossman** have launched an all-out assault on **Demolition's** WWF World tag team championship and leap three spots to number three ... **The Bushwhackers** are once again a force in the WWF; they move up three spots to number six ... **Shaun** and **Steve Simpson** won the World Class Texas tag belts in late April and are the only WCCW team regularly wrestling; they move in at number eight ... **Dustin Rhodes** and **Mike Graham** have been impressive as PWF tag champs; they enter the ratings at number 10.

Finally, your letters. Rich Buska of Pittsburgh writes: *First of all, I am very happy that you are expanding your ratings pages to include many other well-deserving great promotions. It was long overdue. As for another matter, which is your recognizing the AWA as having world titles: I think you should change your thinking about that. The AWA used to be a great organization, but it doesn't compare or come close to the WWF or NWA. It isn't even as good as Stampede, Florida, World Class, CWA, or CWF (not that I think they deserve world title status, either. I don't.). But the AWA doesn't deserve to be a world championship promotion.*

Along the same line—but with a much different opinion—Jeff Morgan of Lee, Massachusetts, wrote: *I'm glad to see that you guys are being patient and giving the AWA a chance to make a comeback. I know a lot of people are saying that the AWA doesn't deserve world championship status, and maybe it doesn't right now, but this is one of the oldest organizations in the world and it has had some of the greatest wrestlers. Jerry Lawler was definitely a worthy World champion, and so was Curt Hennig. The same is true of Pat Tanaka and Paul Diamond. They're a great team. So, even though the AWA is down now, it's still had some great champs. And I guarantee that it will make a comeback very soon.*

And that's it. But we'll try to get around to some more mail next month, along with all the other regular features. The address for mail is: "Ratings Analysis," c/o *The Wrestler;* Box 48; Rockville Centre, NY 11571. □

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